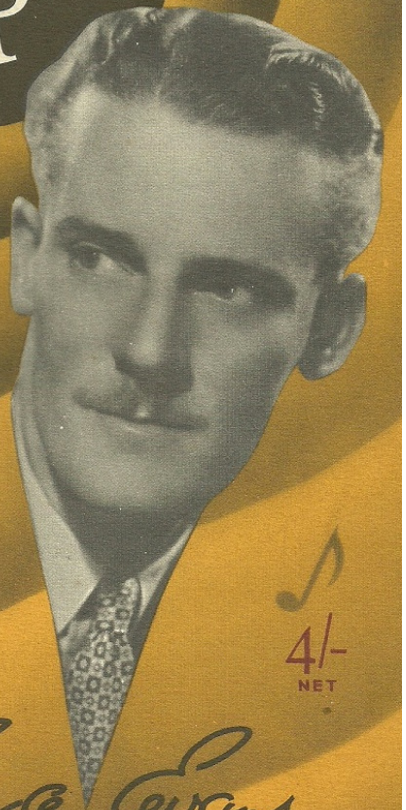
Re-Bop

How to play it
How to write it



Illustrated Treatise on the Newest form of Jazz

By George Evans

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DIZZY GILLESPIE

RE-BOP

How it started

" Re-bop and Dizzy Gillespie," or " Dizzy Gillespie and Re-bop," now seems to be another of those doubles which match up like Hope-Crosby or Abbott-Costello, but how come the new pair, how come " Re-bop " and who is this " Dizzy " character, anyway ? Well, John Birks Gillespie, to give him the name by which " Dizzy " was originally identified, was born in Cheraw, South Carolina, in 1917, and first achieved some degree of recognition as a trumpet player when at the mature age of 19 he successfully auditioned to join Teddy Hill's Orchestra in New York.

Teddy first heard Gillespie playing in Philadelphia, but forgot all about him until some time later in New York when he was casting around for a trumpet replacement. Roy Eldridge, on his way to join the then famous Fletcher Henderson outfit in Chicago, had hitherto played third trumpet with Hill, and it was to take over his vacant chair that occasioned the next meeting between Messrs. Gillespie and Hill.

Gillespie sat in with the Hill Orchestra at their next rehearsal and, after a switch in the trumpet section, was given a try-out on second instead of third. From the start, he was unorthodox in everything he did (he auditioned with his overcoat and gloves on)—he had a habit of always doing the unexpected, both on and off the stand, and could seldom resist an opportunity to clown around, and it was because of his well-earned reputation of unpredictability that Teddy first re-labelled him " dizzy "—and " Dizzy " he remained from then on.

In spite of his many antics and comic behaviour, he was ambitious, hardworking, and displayed much initiative in helping with ideas for the brass section and " head " arrangements for the band. He was completely sold on music, and although at first he earned from it only comparatively small pay packets he managed to save regularly. Despite his other wild characteristics he avoided overmuch of the wine and women, so that he might devote himself more to the third member of that ageless trio.

He worked with the Hill band first in New York and then on tour, visiting the London Palladium in 1937 with a Cotton Club show, then Paris during the summer Exposition and finally returning to the Savoy Ballroom in New York. The Teddy Hill outfit disbanded in 1940 following an argument with the Savoy owners and thus, indirectly, started the train of events which resulted in RE-BOP (or Be-bop).

A certain Henry Minton, an ex-saxophonist and an old friend of Teddy's, heard of the orchestra's break-up and chipped in with an idea which appealed to him. Minton took over a dilapidated dining room, renovated it, called it " Minton's Play House " and installed Teddy Hill as manager and person responsible for upholding a good modern jazz policy. Dizzy, although working first with Cab Calloway and subsequently with Ella Fitzgerald, Les Hite, and others, became one of a group who were often found at Minton's—either working there or just sitting in.

Notable among this frequently changing clique were Joe Guy and Dizzy himself, together with pianist Thelonius Monk, bassist Ted Sturgis, and drummer Kenny Clark, who, between, them, started the new trend in jazz now known as Re-bop or Be-bop, or " kloop-mop," as it was apparently first named. Later on, new disciples were recruited and some of these, such as Buddy Powell, Harold West, Charlie Parker, Frank Paparelli, Clyde Hart, Cozy Cole, Remo Palmieri, and Slam Stewart, are closely associated with Dizzy's current fame.

Without attempting to belittle the part played by Dizzy in helping to create RE-BOP and while giving him the lion's share of the credit, it must be remembered that this new development in jazz was not the product of one mind, but of several working in close collaboration.

So, there you have the first chapters in the story of RE-BOP—a story which has just begun, and the bulk of which has yet to be written. Its cast will grow from day to day with the addition of each new player, and no doubt its path will to some degree alter direction under every new influence exerted upon it by both present and future devotees. Started by a few, it is a cult already adopted by many, and is within the comprehension of anyone sufficiently interested to invest in a little serious study and careful thought.

What is Re-Bop?

Having thus introduced those who in the beginning were responsible for the creation and presentation of RE-BOP, let us now study and try to define this same peculiarly named product. For our first stage in this study we must obviously hear RE-BOP, and we must listen carefully to it so that we may be able to recognise and identify it whenever and wherever we may hear it in future.

So far, so good—but if we are to listen to it BEFORE we are able to recognise it, how can we be sure that we are hearing the genuine article ?

Well, at the moment, the obvious answer to this question is to listen to the originators—Dizzy and his associates—by whatever means available to us. As the possibility of hearing these artistes " in the flesh " is very remote ; the opportunities (if any) of hearing them via the radio are extremely infrequent, and as we shall need to go further than just " listening," there is only one medium worthy of any serious consideration—i.e., a gramophone and records. So, all we have to do is hie us away to a music store and purchase an armful of Gillespie discs ! (Or, coming back to earth, we manage, after weeks of exhaustive searching, wild-goose chasing, fruitless bargaining and cajoling, to beg, borrow or purchase at a price reckoned in telephone numbers, one, or perhaps, two of these elusive and precious phenomena.)

Well, all right—we've got our record(s)—we play it (them) over on the gramophone—we listen carefully " once through," and examine our reactions to what we have heard.

And what have we heard ?

Some three minutes odd per side of music—" our kind of music," but different.

Something which sounds a little weird—but not repellent ; something both exciting and enervating—definitely jazz, but different. Something which gives us a peculiar feeling of suspense and, not infrequently, of surprise as well. Something very satisfying—perhaps even more satisfying than the jazz of the old giants, and certainly displaying a much higher standard of technique than the products of 1925–1935. Something with plenty of climaxes and plenty of wrong notes ! But, let's listen again—especially to those wrong notes.

Do they still sound wrong ?

Well, yes and no—they're definitely not the ones we've been used to hearing on those chords, and for the life of us we can't quite figure out how they fit in, but let's leave it at that for the moment and compromise by calling them " right wrong notes." We'll come back to them later.

Any other observations ?

Definitely—the music has a terrific beat—it sounds frantic (particularly some of the trumpet solo stuff), it seems to be mainly spontaneous—it's pretty fast tempo, too, and it certainly " keeps going." We like the unison front line passages—and that reminds us, we've heard little or no " block " work—no 2, 3 or 4 part voicings—which is yet another " angle " that's different.

The rhythm section " does things," too—sometimes individually and sometimes collectively (and we don't mean solos). Yes, we've probably heard those things before—but again they're just a bit different.

And what about the phrasing ? It's mostly ON the beat from the front line (not many cross-quavers or anticipated beats)—there's quite a lot of both " straight " quavers (which seem to give it more speed) and dotted quaver-semiquaver pairs—the semiquavers get " ghosted " quite a bit, too, and this seems to help accentuate the beat.

And the phrases ?

Quite a few clichés—noticeably that gruppetto-styled one. They seem, on the whole, to be a shade longer and more continuous than what we've been used to hearing.

Oh, yes—while we think of it—although the rhythm section indulges in quite a bit of pattern weaving, the basic beat is a straight four in a bar—no stress on the first and third beats—just an even 1, 2, 3, 4—good and strong ; crisp, but not forced.

Anything else we can think of just now ?

Yes, two points of interest :—

(1) The Gillespie outfit is usually small (6 or 7 piece).

(2) If what we have been hearing is RE-BOP, then RE-BOP is not confined to one instrument.

Good enough, now we're getting somewhere.

Let us, at this point, reconsider the observations we have so far made. Let us examine them one by one, test them for flaws and try to determine whether or no they are in any way conclusive.

Point No. 1.—REBOP is weird. True, it is unusual enough to be termed weird at this stage, and if we further clarify by saying that according to existing standards it is neither unmusical nor unattractive, we can obviate the inapplicable constructions on the above definition. If we now agree that RE-BOP is weird, is it correct to assume that, conversely, weird music is RE-BOP? Obviously not, because the music of the new Boyd Raeburn Orchestra is infinitely more weird, but is not by any stretch of the imagination RE-BOP. But then, as much of the Raeburn music is not "for dancing," let us try someone else—for example, Stan Kenton and one of his "Artistry" Series (or "Opus a Dollar Three Eighty" or "Conversing with the Brain"). Weird? But definitely. RE-BOP? Just as definitely NOT!! So much for the converse to point No. 1.

Now for point No. 2. RE-BOP is exciting.—True again, granted of course that we are among those to whom good jazz, swing, jump, beat music, etc., is exciting. But again, although we agree that RE-BOP is exciting, the converse does not apply.

The Kenton Orchestra is exciting—so are those of Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Gene Krupa, Tommy Dorsey and, for the jazz lovers, the outfits which produced the now classic music of the late twenties—all, admittedly, exciting, but none of them RE-BOP.

Point No. 3. RE-BOP is enervating (if we are the kind to be emotionally exhausted by something new in music—to be "knocked cold" by something which we regard as "the end"). Agreed? And conversely, is enervating music necessarily RE-BOP? Once more, we need only quote Kenton and Raeburn, to prove that the answer is decidedly NO!

Point No. 4. RE-BOP is JAZZ. This is where we are perhaps asking for trouble from those purists who insist that no new jazz has been added to the archives for at least the past ten years—but we'll risk that in the belief that an overwhelming majority will accept and agree with our opinion. To quote the converse in this case would be ridiculous, because jazz has been with us for over 20 years, but RE-BOP has only just appeared.

Points Nos. 5 and 6. RE-BOP produces a feeling of suspense and is not infrequently surprising. True? For the answer to this question we must think back to our first hearing—we must recall the first time we heard each of those "right-wrong notes," and we must ask ourselves whether or not any or all of them came as a surprise to us. Well?

With regard to that feeling of suspense—let us think back to our reactions on first hearing those phrases which contained not one, but whole groups of consecutive "right-wrong 'uns." Didn't we feel that although these phrases somehow sounded O.K., they were "off chord" and should be guided back into sequence? Didn't we find ourselves waiting for them to return to the basic chords? And weren't we held in suspense while the progressions were "bent," or turned off in different directions, to "arrive" by a new and devious track? If the answer to these questions is "yes," then we are agreed on points Nos. 5 and 6 and our next step is to examine the converse. Kenton's music is full of suspense—the late Glen Miller music gave us frequent surprises—and the new Raeburn music tops both of these in providing a new wealth of suspense and surprises, but once again none of this is RE-BOP, so the converse is again untrue.

Point No. 7. RE-BOP is satisfying both in a general way and specifically from a jazz standpoint. True, or false? Well, phrase for phrase, solo for solo, atmosphere for atmosphere, didn't we feel just as satisfied after our first meeting with Dizzy and Co. as we did when we first heard Louis Armstrong or Pops Bechet? Isn't this new music just as sparkling, as exhilarating and as interesting as the old?

After hearing a Gillespie disc, do we say "There's nothing worth noting or emulating there—nothing convincing, nothing memorable"? If we do—— But if we don't, then point No. 7 holds good—and what about the converse?

Obviously, this is false, because for a long time we've been hearing both dance music and jazz which have been satisfying, but certainly not RE-BOP. Fair enough?

Point No. 8. RE-BOP is full of climaxes. Let's get it straight—we don't mean big climaxes—not big crescendoes or orchestrated build-ups, but, more correctly, a series of high spots, each of which comes right out of the blue, and makes us sit up. But quick!—aren't there plenty of these? Yes. But conversely, if we quote Kenton, Goodman, Dorsey, and Miller again, it is clear that climaxes don't necessarily mean RE-BOP.

Point No. 9. RE-BOP is different. Sure, it's "different." We don't have to analyse it to agree on this, and it's "different" in more than one respect—this is proven by the fact that the converse arguments to each of the first eight points have been found untrue. Likewise, the converse to this point will not apply, because, although every trend and style in dance music has been, and is, "different" in varying degrees, there is only one RE-BOP.

Point No. 10. RE-BOP is "beat" music. Purely a matter of opinion (as is most everything concerning modern music), but surely the answer by an overwhelming majority will be "yes"? So, taking this much for granted, can we assume that all "beat" music is therefore RE-BOP? Again, by quoting the Kenton brand of beat music (undoubtedly terrific in its own particular style), we find that this is not the case.

Point No. 11. RE-BOP is mainly spontaneous. This we cannot decide with any more degree of certainty than in the case of any of the jazz we have heard since the earliest days—it certainly sounds just as spontaneous as its forerunners—and with regard to the unison passages, these sound like the result of "head" arranging—which, after all, is a development on the good old riff basis. As to the converse, the fact that RE-BOP is admittedly something new, whereas spontaneous sounding jazz has been with us these many years, gives a quite decisive answer to this.

Point No. 12. RE-BOP calls for a fairly fast tempo and features fast-moving phrases. This is only partly correct, because, although the majority of current RE-BOP appears at tempos of from 40 bars per minute, there are some slow tempo examples available. Similarly, although fast-moving phrases are by far the most abundant and popular, there are to be heard some good illustrations of a more lethargic style of RE-BOP. Now, if we think back to all the fast tempo music and fast-moving phrases we have heard in the past, we can see that the converse to this does not apply.

Point No. 13. A characteristic of RE-BOP is its unison passages. This is true if we consider that every example of RE-BOP we have heard to date contains varying amounts of unison—played, perhaps, by the "front line" only or perhaps incorporating some of the rhythm section as well. And, conversely, does unison playing necessarily produce RE-BOP? It doesn't need much figuring out, does it?

Point No. 14. RE-BOP does not confine the rhythm section to a fixed four-in-a-bar, but allows freedom to indulge in cross-beats and rhythmic deviations. True? Yes indeed, and this we believe to be an important characteristic of RE-BOP, but one not entirely peculiar to it, as is proved, for example, by the functions of the rhythm section in the Boyd Raeburn Orchestra (or rather to those instruments hitherto referred to as the "rhythm section"). So here again the converse does not apply.

Point No. 15. RE-BOP features certain kinds of phrasing (straight, even quavers)—alternate dotted quavers with semiquavers—"ghosted" after-quavers or semiquavers and a strong "ON BEAT" drive. This is true, but in itself neither exclusive nor conclusive, because we have heard these phrasings before—before RE-BOP and yet sounding nothing like RE-BOP.

Point No. 16. RE-BOP features an "even four" basic rhythm (that is, with no additional stress on the first and third beats of each bar). Again, this is correct, but although characteristic of RE-BOP it is also characteristic of practically all current swing music. So, once again, the converse is untrue.

Point No. 17. RE-BOP is produced and featured by small combinations. Originally this was so, but Dizzy's new combination is in the "big-band" class, so this is not a "must be." (Also Woody Herman's Herd was considered by many to produce "big band RE-BOP.")

Point No. 18. RE-BOP, as music, contains clichés. True, but clichés don't make RE-BOP—jazz has produced many clichés, and so has swing music, but they still aren't RE-BOP. Current RE-BOP clichés, in common with all clichés (whether in music or speech), are things of the moment—soon dated, soon replaced by new ones, and soon forgotten by the majority.

Point No. 19. RE-BOP demands a high standard of technique. Fine; the standard displayed in RE-BOP is high, but it is also of a specialised kind (about which we shall say more later), and this is important when examining the converse, because, obviously, although such names as Harry James and Jimmy Dorsey are both credited with the highest standards in technique, neither of them could be associated with RE-BOP (not to date, anyway.)

Point No. 20 brings us back to those "right-wrong notes" of which RE-BOP contains so many. Are these a characteristic of RE-BOP? They certainly seem to be since they are constantly appearing, no matter whether in unison passages or solos (and no matter who is playing the solos). And conversely? Well, they could be applied to other styles of dance music without necessarily producing RE-BOP, but we should note that they are perhaps the most important single characteristic by which RE-BOP can be identified.

So, to sum up our progress so far, we observe that RE-BOP has many characteristics, nearly every one of which is common to one or another different kind of dance music; but although any of these characteristics, taken singly, or in any way short of the whole, are not exclusively applicable to this new kind of music, we find that RE-BOP is the only answer to the sum total of all of them.

ALL the above features are necessary to produce RE-BOP, but as each is not equally important, let us now concentrate only on those which we can henceforth call the MAJOR POINTS of RE-BOP.

The major points of Re-Bop

Upon considering the relative importance of each of the characteristics already dealt with we find that the most significant among them is the point concerning "right-wrong notes." As this is the most revolutionary aspect of RE-BOP and responsible for most of its atmosphere of excitement, suspense and surprise, let us therefore give it our first attention. Let us play our record(s) over once more, this time noting carefully those particular notes and phrases which come into the above category. What progress do we make? And at what conclusions do we arrive?

First, we notice that a lot of the "queer" notes are in fact passing notes, but with a difference. This difference being that they fall *on the beat* instead of the hitherto customary after-quaver, thus coming into direct conflict with their accompanying harmonies (or chords) through being sounded simultaneously. We therefore commence our study by setting down on paper a comparison of the old and the new methods (in dance music) of using passing notes on a simple major chord (Figs. 1 and 2, respectively).

(Incidentally any passing note "on the beat" may be termed an "appoggiatura").

Fig. 1

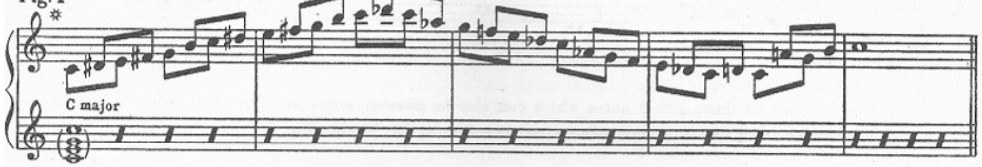
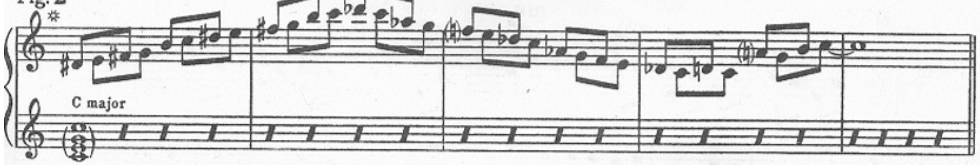


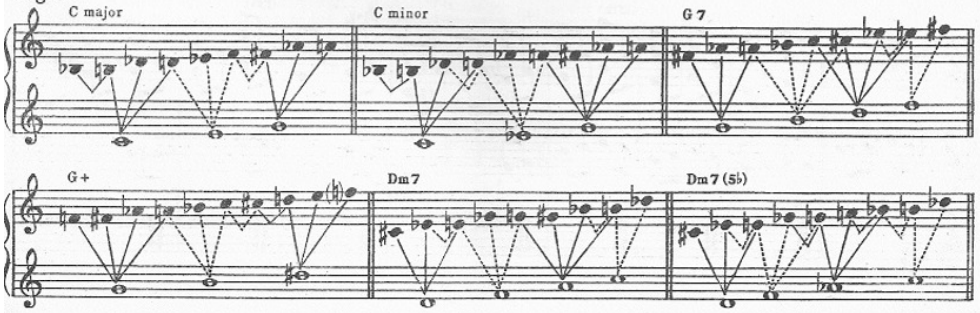
Fig. 2



* *The notes with upturned tails are the passing notes (or appoggiaturas).*

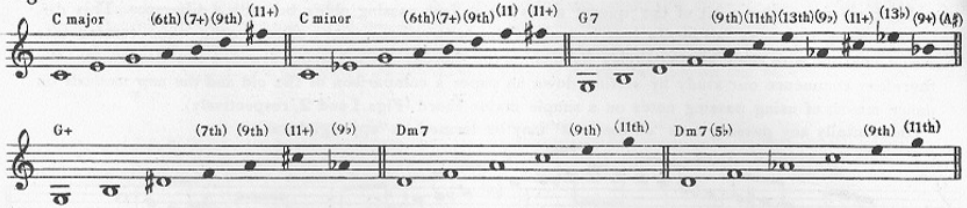
This done, we can proceed to list each of our basic chords with all its possible passing notes (Fig. 3) working, for simplicity's sake in the "open" key of C (major and minor).

Fig. 3



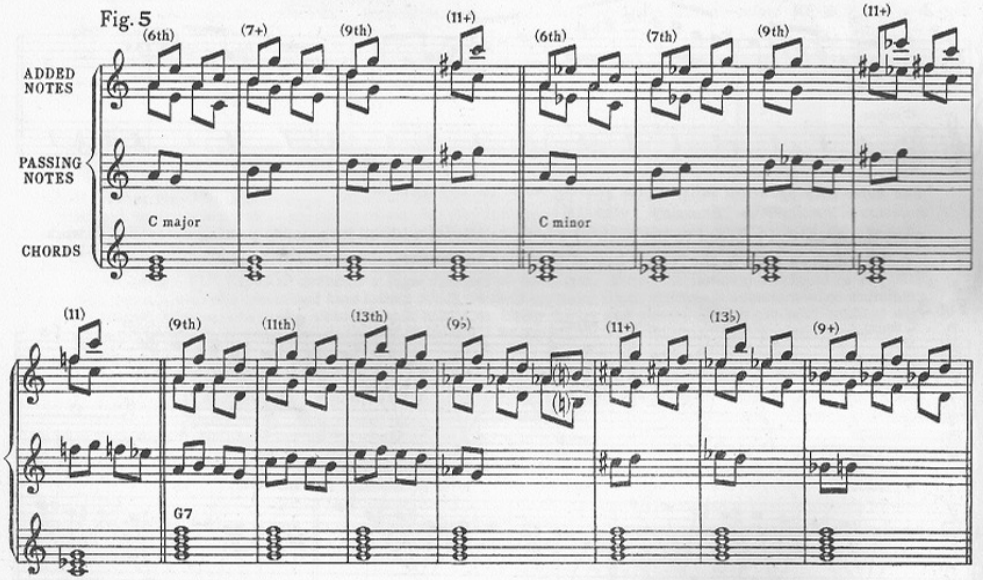
These notes, although differently placed are still governed as hitherto by the rules concerning passing notes- but on a further examination of some of the phrases in question we find that not all of our passing notes do, in fact, "pass" in the recognised manner. Therefore, we assume that they are not true passing notes, and accordingly we turn our attentions in a rather different direction- namely, a study of the use of added notes on any given basic chord. We find that several of these can be used with each chord, and, for future reference, we likewise commit them to paper, noting meanwhile that some are more in common use than others. (Fig. 4)

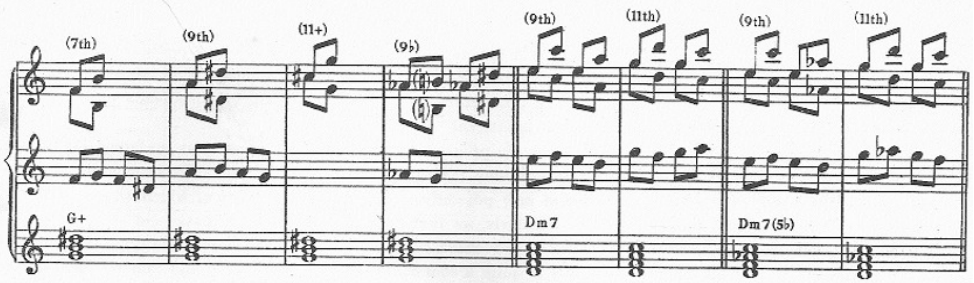
Fig. 4



This done, we extract those added notes which can also be passing notes and list them each in its dual capacity, so that we have handy a table of comparisons for further study. (Fig. 5)

Fig. 5





Passing note rule: A "passing" note must pass on to its chord by a step of a major or a minor second (ie. a tone or a semitone) either ascending or desending. If any greater interval is used it becomes an "added note."

Next, we note that the added intervals on any chord can be built into phrases (on that chord) by varying degrees, the first of these is obtained by using only the more obvious of the added notes and incorporating them singly, *i.e.* by following each such note with one from the basic chord, (Fig. 6).

The second step is obtained still using only the obvious added notes, but this time, incorporating them in pairs, (Fig. 7). Next, comes the incorporation of the more unusual added notes either singly (Fig. 8) in pairs (Fig. 9) or, in as large groups as possible (Fig. 10).

Finally, we can use all of the passing notes either singly, in pairs, or in larger groups (Fig. 11).

Fig. 6

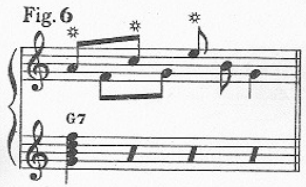


Fig. 7

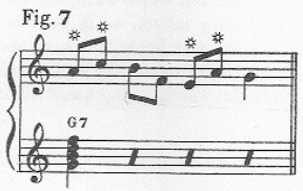


Fig. 8

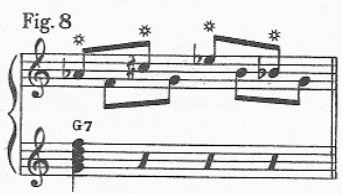


Fig. 9

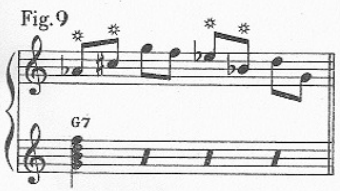


Fig. 10

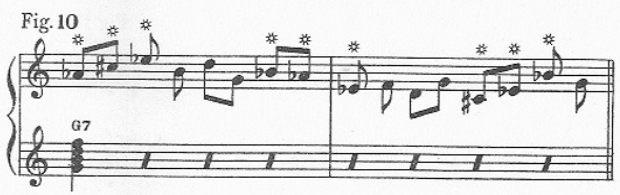
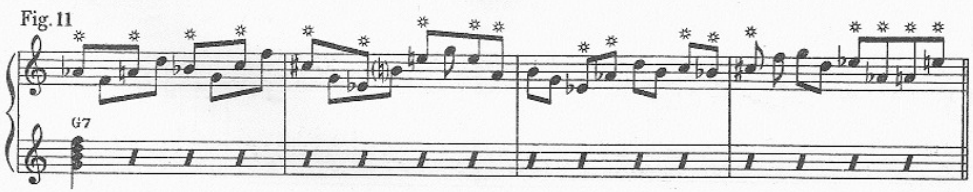


Fig. 11



*The notes with upturned tails (marked *) are all either "passing" or "added" notes.*

So far, so good, but upon reflection we find that this is by no means the end of our investigation– there are still main phrases, which, although apparently built upon the added intervals and passing notes which we have already tabulated, do not follow any of the procedures we have so far examined. This leads us to yet another avenue of approach, namely, the use of additional "passing chords."

Thus, we find that where in the old way a certain progression was completed in perhaps one "step" (Fig. 12), it is now extended to make two steps– though still only taking up the same total number of beats in the process (Fig. 13). Thus it can be seen that a lot of new possibilities are opened up, a few of which we set down on paper to act as future guidance (Fig. 14). Similarly, we find phrases containing both "basic" and "added" notes arranged in such a manner as to form an entirely new chord superimposed upon our basic one (Fig. 15).

We continue our analysis and find that this is quite a common occurence in RE-BOP and that the matter does not end here. We find that chords consisting entirely of "passing notes" are superimposed upon the basic progressions (Fig. 16) and this leads us to examine yet another new aspect of RE-BOP.

Let us take the phrase shown in Fig. 17. The melody notes are alternate basic notes of the accompanying chords (the second and fourth notes being the roots of the chords "C" and "G7" respectively) while the first note (E♭) is a "passing" note (which doesn't "pass") and the third note is the augmented 9th on G7th.

This, then, is the position if reviewed "vertically," *i.e.* reading downwards from the melody to its chord on each successive beat. But, if we regard it from a "horizontal" aspect, *i.e.* by following the melody along its line (independant of the accompanying chords) we find that it forms the chord of E♭6. Thus we find the simultaneous use of two keys (E♭ for the melody and C for the accompaniment) and this, together with the frequent appearance of superimposed chords leads us to conclude that RE-BOP is, in part, bitonal in its musical construction.

This is quite a step forward in dance music and while we would not make so bold as to liken it to the modern serious composers of the Schönberg school, we think it does in some way reflect their influence– modified, of course, and adapted to the jazz idiom, but none the less recognisable. This in direct contrast to the Boyd Raeburn music which, strongly influenced by the atonal school of thought, is using dance band instrumentation (with additional woodwind) but breaking away from dance music in favour of what is in fact, modern serious atonal music.

Fig. 12

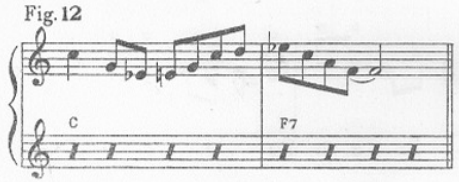


Fig. 13

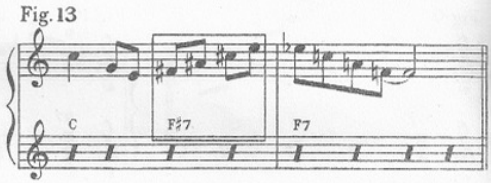
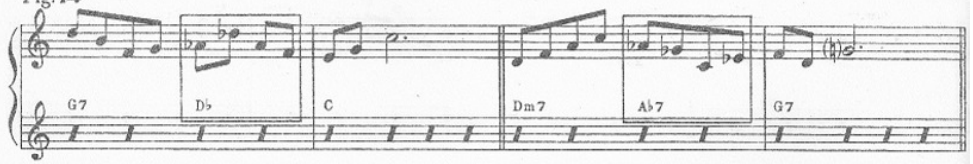


Fig. 14



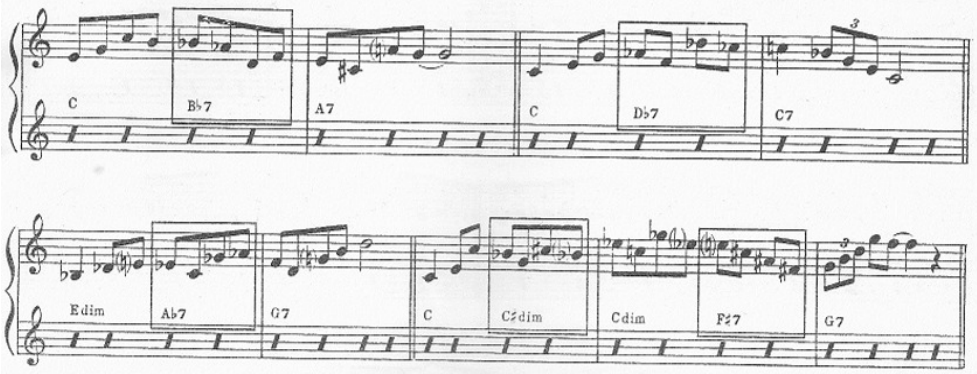


Fig. 15

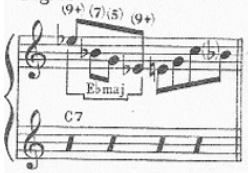


Fig. 16

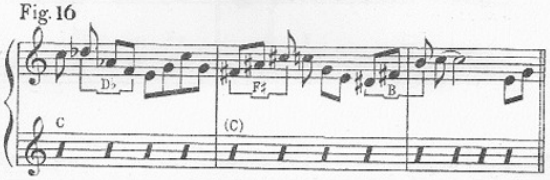
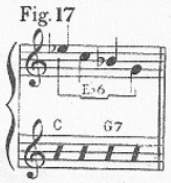


Fig. 17



Having examined the various foundations on which to build our RE-BOP phrases, we next set about turning what we have learned to practical use. We proceed to construct suitable phrases to cover the chord progressions we are likely to meet most regularly, and set them down in the form of exercises which work through every practical key (Figs. 18-25). We do not make the phrases too deliberate in style, because they are still only a "guide" to be adapted to whatever clichés or phrasing styles are in fashion at any given time.

Notes on musical examples Nos. 18 to 25.

Each of the examples shown in Figs. 18-25 can be played as one continuous exercise through all twelve keys.

If out of range for the solo instrument, any phrase of two bars can be raised or lowered by an octave at will.

All added notes are numbered to illustrate the intervals, e.g.– (9♭). All passing notes are indicated thus– (P)→ where a note is both passing and added it is shown thus– (9♭)(P)→

Fig. 18

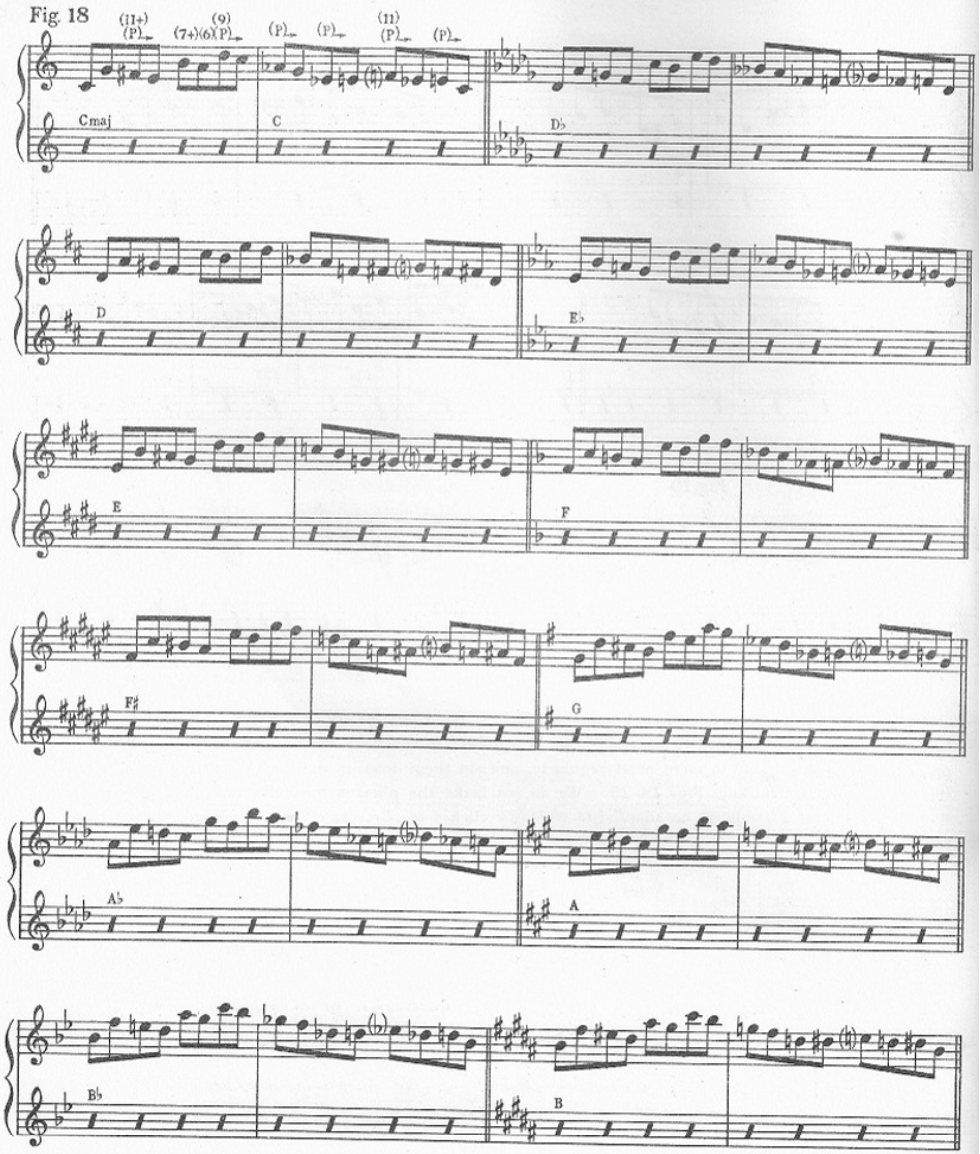


Fig. 19

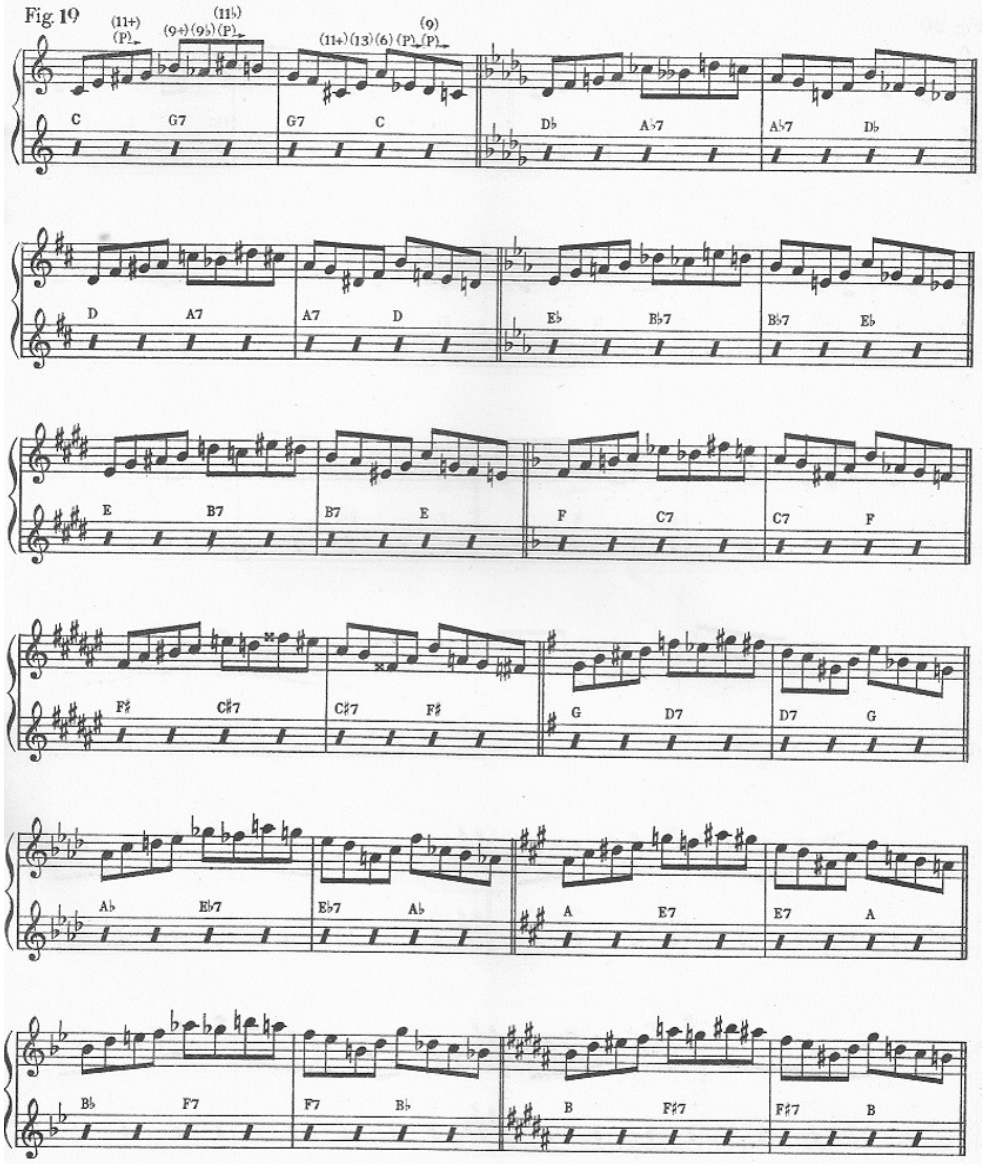

(11+) (P)
(9+) (9♭) (11♭) (P)
(11+) (13) (6) (P) (9) (P)
C G7
G7 C
D♭ A♭7
A♭7 D♭
D A7
A7 D
E♭ B♭7
B♭7 E♭
E B7
B7 E
F C7
C7 F
F♯ C♯7
C♯7 F♯
G D7
D7 G
A♭ E♭7
E♭7 A♭
A E7
E7 A
B♭ F7
F7 B♭
B F♯7
F♯7 B

Fig. 20

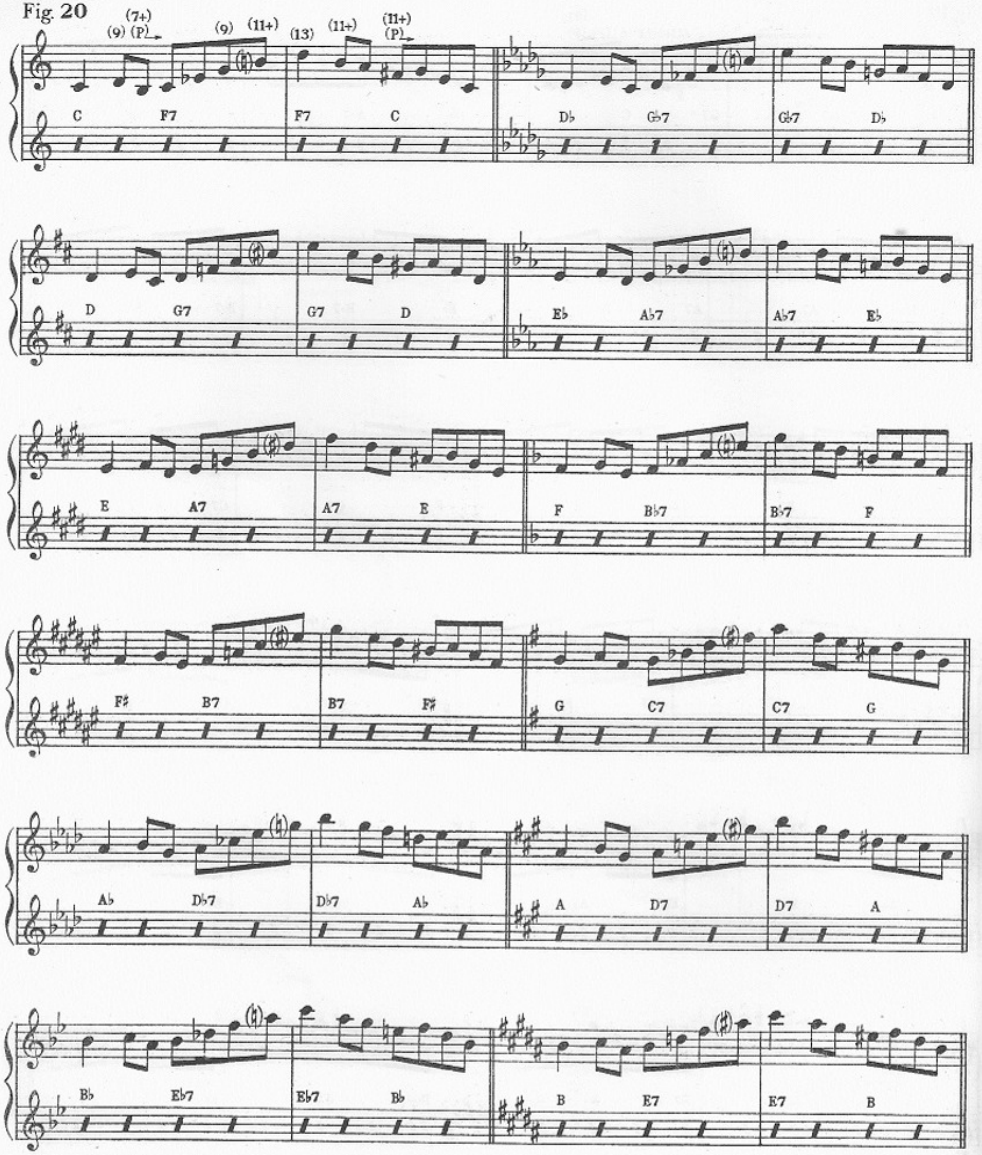

(7+) (9) (P)
(9) (11+)
(13) (11+) (11+) (P)
C F7
F7 C
D♭ G♭7
G♭7 D♭
D G7
G7 D
E♭ A♭7
A♭7 E♭
E A7
A7 E
F B♭7
B♭7 F
F♯ B7
B7 F♯
G C7
C7 G
A♭ D♭7
D♭7 A♭
A D7
D7 A
B♭ E♭7
E♭7 B♭
B E7
E7 B

Fig. 21

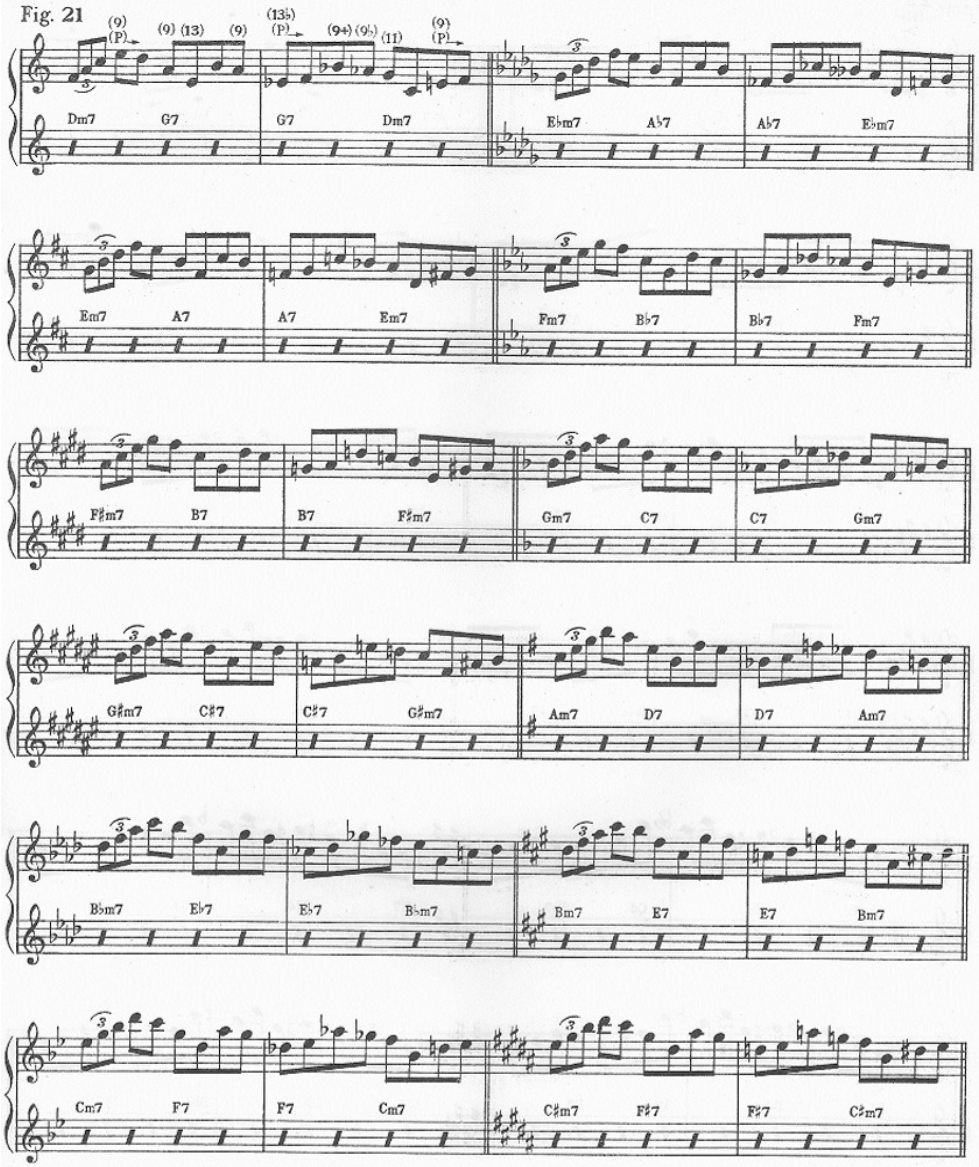

(9) (P)
(9) (13)
(9)
(13♭) (P)
(9+) (9♭)
(11)
(9) (P)
Dm7 G7
G7 Dm7
E♭m7 A♭7
A♭7 E♭m7
Em7 A7
A7 Em7
Fm7 B♭7
B♭7 Fm7
F♯m7 B7
B7 F♯m7
Gm7 C7
C7 Gm7
G♯m7 C♯7
C♯7 G♯m7
Am7 D7
D7 Am7
B♭m7 E♭7
E♭7 B♭m7
Bm7 E7
E7 Bm7
Cm7 F7
F7 Cm7
C♯m7 F♯7
F♯7 C♯m7

Fig. 22

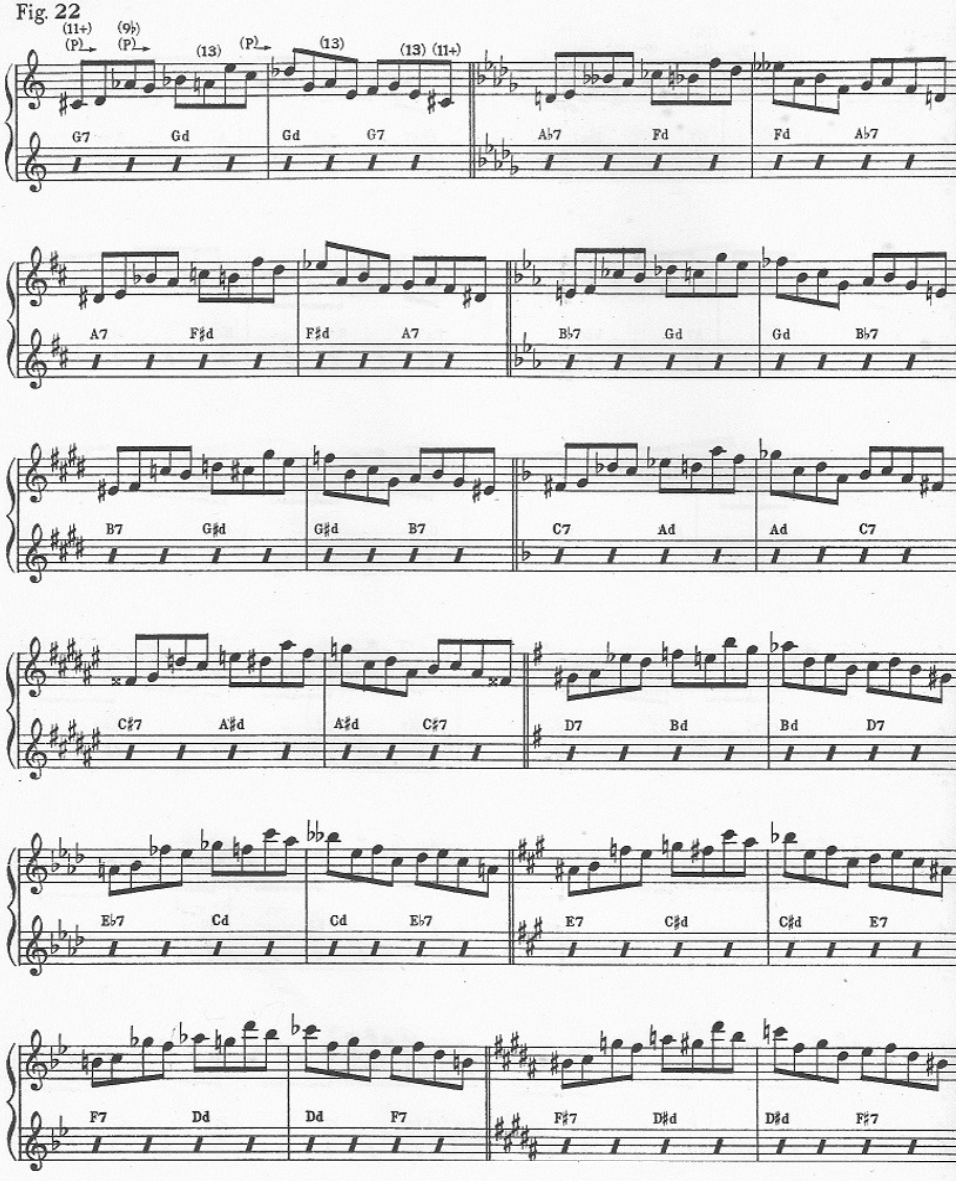

(11+) (P)
(9♭) (P)
(13) (P)
(13)
(13) (11+)
G7 Gd
Gd G7
A♭7 Fd
Fd A♭7
A7 F♯d
F♯d A7
B♭7 Gd
Gd B♭7
B7 G♯d
G♯d B7
C7 Ad
Ad C7
C♯7 A♯d
A♯d C♯7
D7 Bd
Bd D7
E♭7 Cd
Cd E♭7
E7 C♯d
C♯d E7
F7 Dd
Dd F7
F♯7 D♯d
D♯d F♯7

Fig. 23

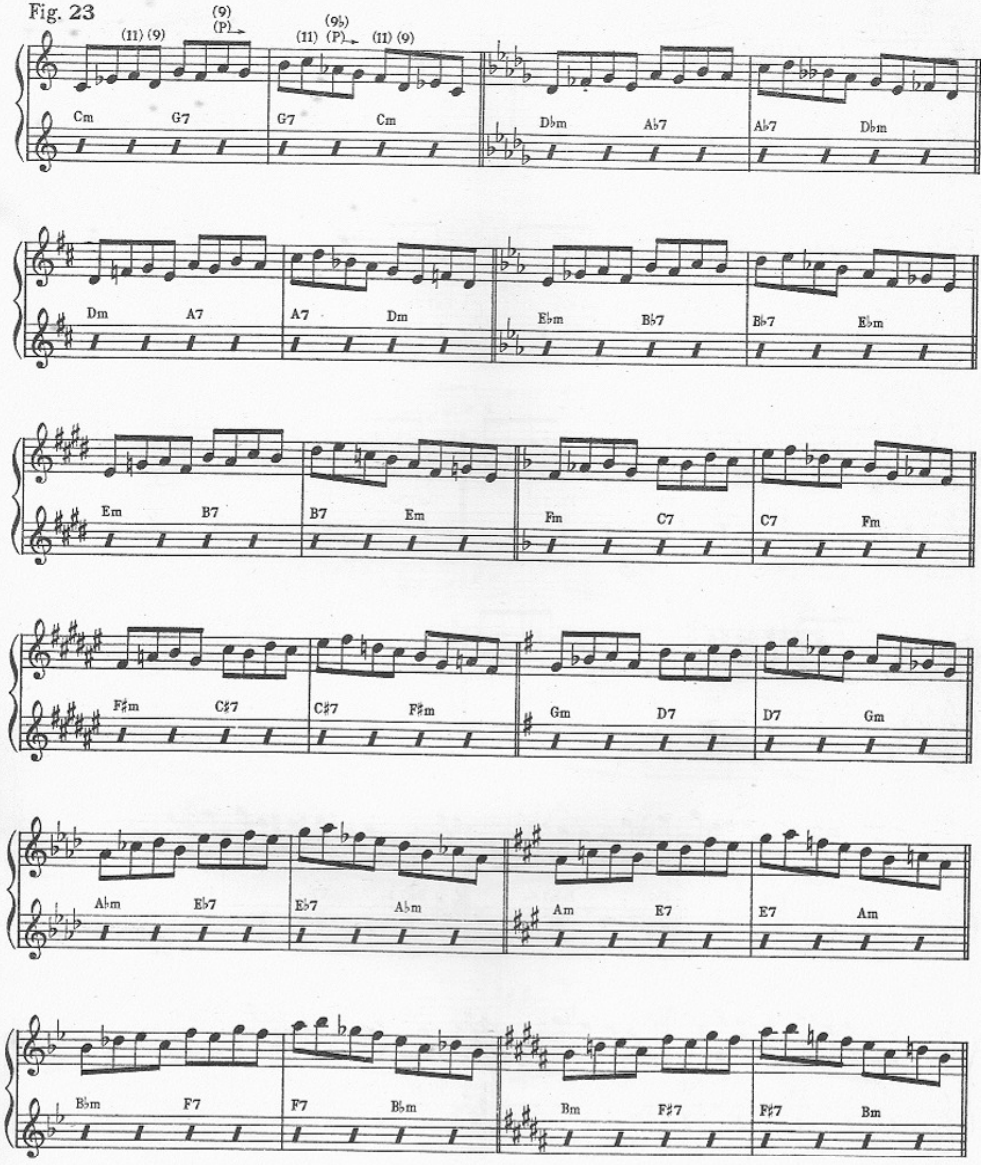

(11) (9)
(9) (P)
(11) (9♭) (P) (11) (9)
Cm G7 G7 Cm
D♭m A♭7 A♭7 D♭m
Dm A7 A7 Dm
E♭m B♭7 B♭7 E♭m
Em B7 B7 Em
Fm C7 C7 Fm
F♯m C♯7 C♯7 F♯m
Gm D7 D7 Gm
A♭m E♭7 E♭7 A♭m
Am E7 E7 Am
B♭m F7 F7 B♭m
Bm F♯7 F♯7 Bm

Fig. 24

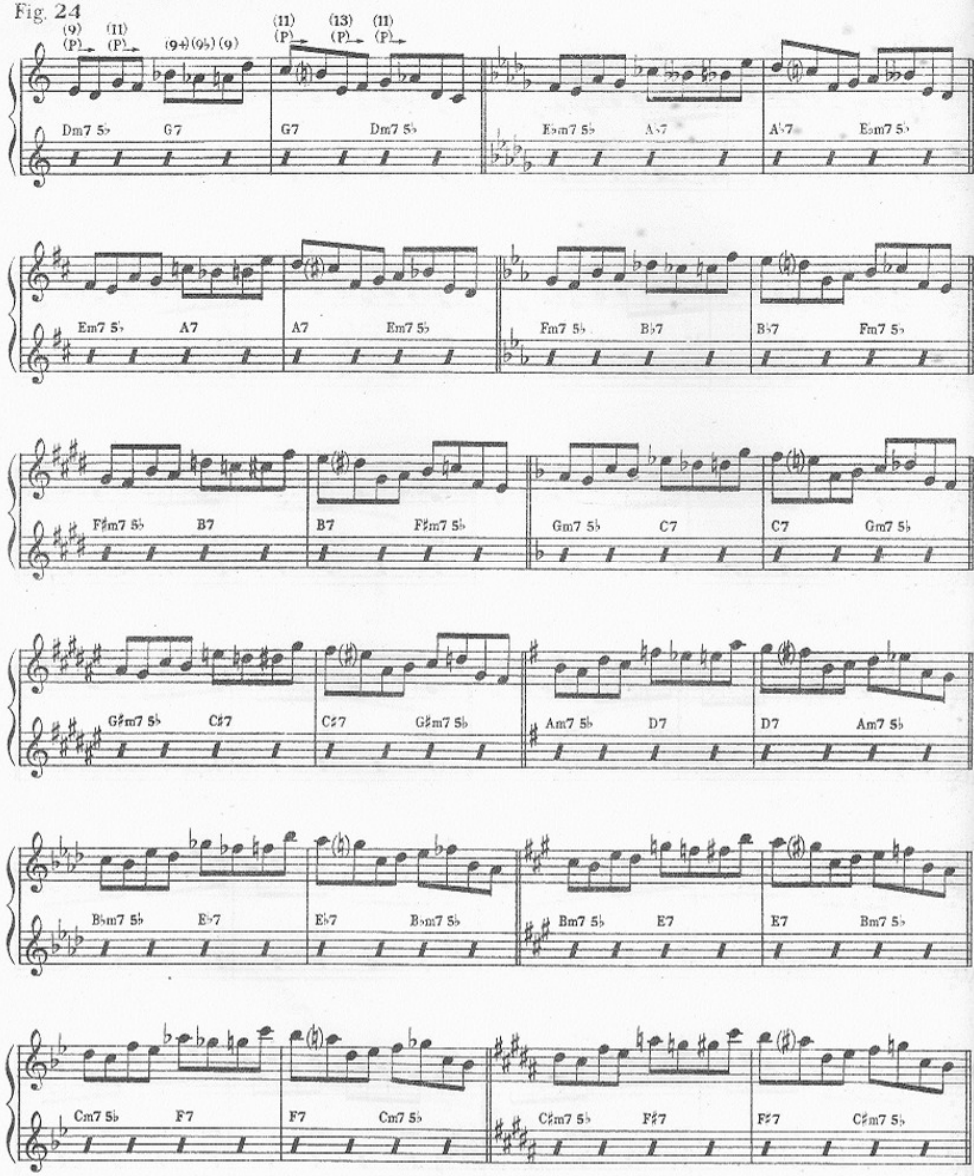
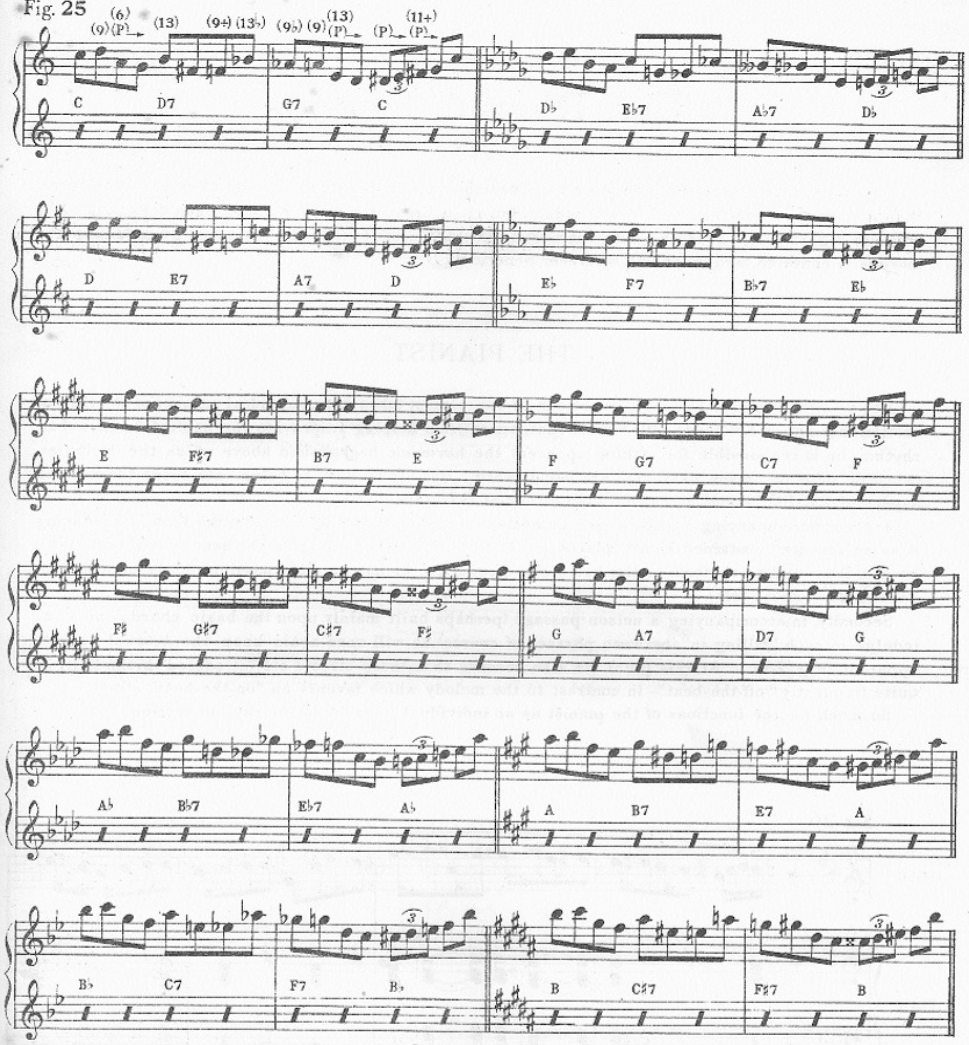

(9) (P) (11) (P) (9♯) (9♭) (9)
(11) (P) (13) (P) (11) (P)
Dm7 5♭ G7 G7 Dm7 5♭
E♭m7 5♭ A♭7 A♭7 E♭m7 5♭
Em7 5♭ A7 A7 Em7 5♭
Fm7 5♭ B♭7 B♭7 Fm7 5♭
F♯m7 5♭ B7 B7 F♯m7 5♭
Gm7 5♭ C7 C7 Gm7 5♭
G♯m7 5♭ C♯7 C♯7 G♯m7 5♭
Am7 5♭ D7 D7 Am7 5♭
B♭m7 5♭ E♭7 E♭7 B♭m7 5♭
Bm7 5♭ E7 E7 Bm7 5♭
Cm7 5♭ F7 F7 Cm7 5♭
C♯m7 5♭ F♯7 F♯7 C♯m7 5♭

Fig. 25



We are now equipped with a general store of ideas upon which we can invent countless variations and which we can use as material while actually at work "on the stand"—that is, if we are one of the front line men, or the pianist or guitarist when taking a solo.

But suppose we belong to the rhythm section—what happens when we're not playing a solo? Well, this question leads us to an examination of perhaps the second most important feature (or features) of RE-BOP, namely, the functions of the rhythm section both as individuals and as a team.

The Rhythm Section

Here we find that both the pianist and the drummer enjoy more freedom and more scope for ideas than have been customary in any previous jazz, but—it is organised in character. Each does not go his own way regardless of everyone else, but works in co-operation to help the front line by providing atmosphere, cohesion, and emphasis wherever beneficial.

THE PIANIST

Let us first examine the main functions of the pianist taken as an individual member of the rhythm section (but not as a soloist). We notice that, apart from helping to provide the basic four-in-a-bar rhythm, he is responsible for making apparent the harmonic background above which the melodies (whether solos or unison passages) are being heard. This he does to bring into focus the bitonal aspect of RE-BOP—and he can do it in either of two ways.

Firstly, in accompanying a solo, he can emphasise each chord change if he thinks fit by introducing it as an accented sustained chord (played either in both hands or in the right hand only if preferred) he can, if he wishes, conform to the basic chord sequence or he can add "passing chords" at will (Figs. 26 and 27, respectively).

Secondly, in accompanying a unison passage (perhaps built mainly upon the basic chords) he can indulge in such "filling in" (between phrases of course) as will once again keep the bitonal aspect apparent (Fig. 28). At this point we also observe that these effects are introduced rhythmically—quite frequently "off-the-beat"—in contrast to the melody which favours an "on-the-beat" stress.

So much for the functions of the pianist as an individual member of the rhythm section.

Fig. 26

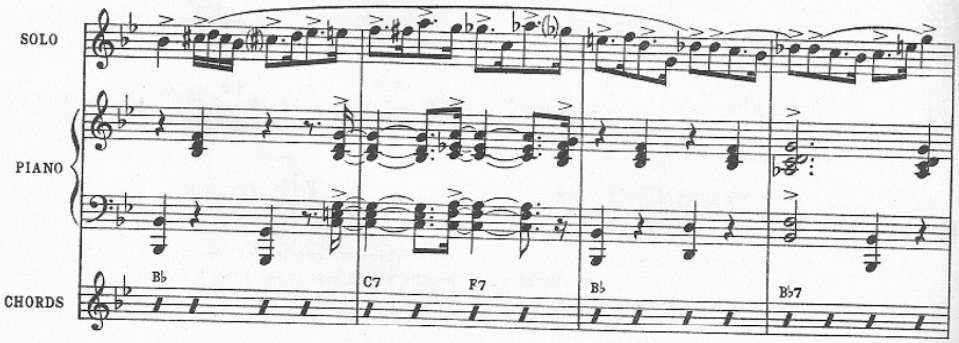


Fig. 27

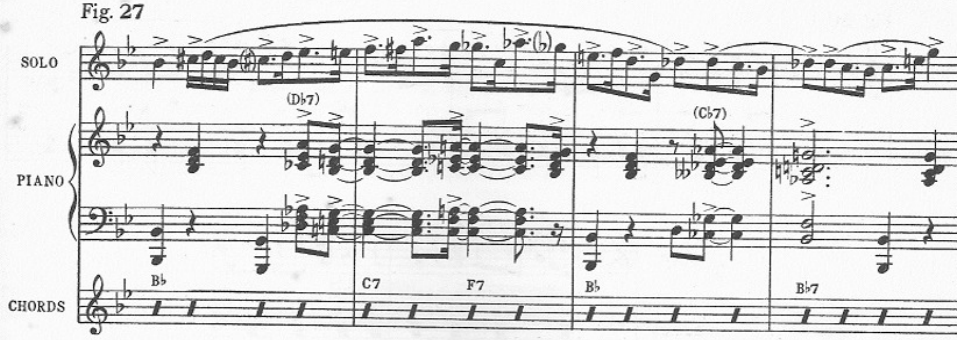
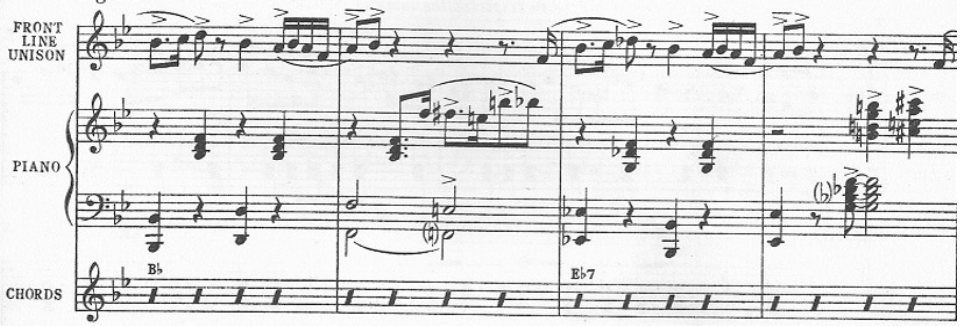


Fig. 28



THE DRUMMER

Here we observe that whereas, hitherto, this member was considered to be doing all that was necessary by providing a solid steady rhythm (with occasional cymbal beat, rimshot or bass drum thud), he is now employed in a wider capacity. We find him emphasising the frequent "mop-mop" phrases, (Fig. 29); busying himself with suitable cross-rhythm patterns behind, perhaps, a trumpet solo (Fig. 30); echoing or boosting a climax (Figs. 31 and 32); backing up the piano chord-effects (Fig. 33) and helping to provide atmosphere throughout—but at all times working thoughtfully and attentively; always taking good care not to spoil any effect by overdoing it—and never "hogging" the limelight at someone else's expense.

Fig. 29

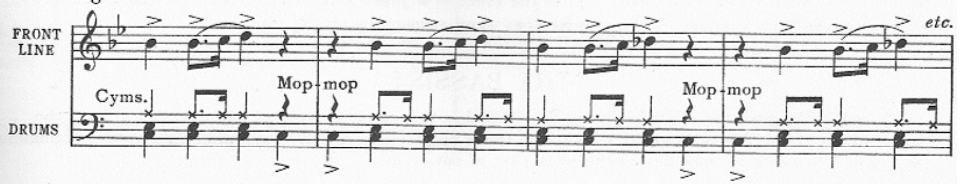


Fig. 30

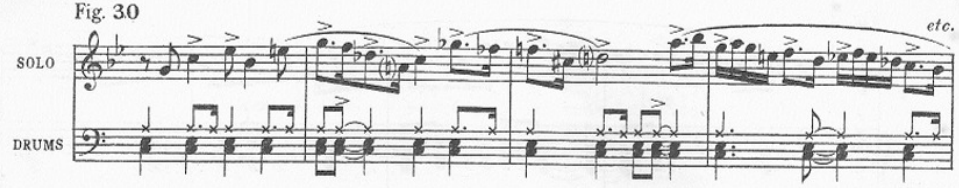
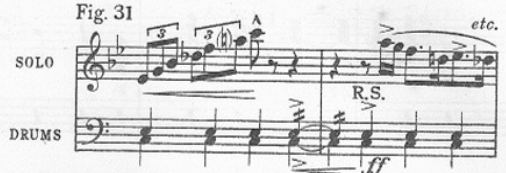


Fig. 31



(The "echo" can be played in triplets—the same as the melody—if preferred)

Fig. 32

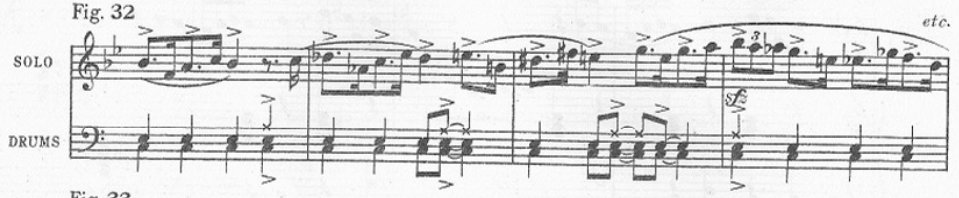
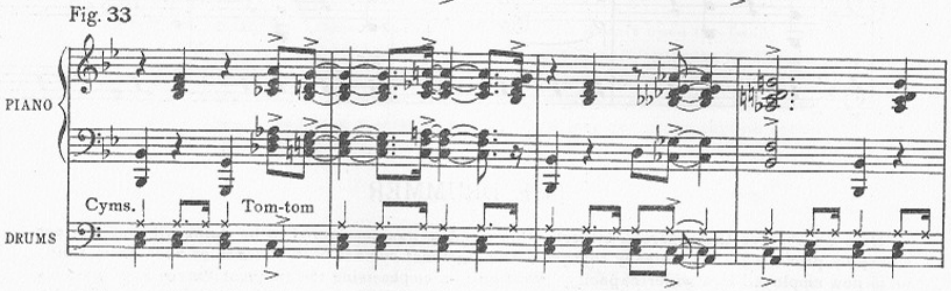


Fig. 33



THE GUITARIST

Regarded now as an individual member of the above section (not in his capacity as a soloist), his job is mainly to provide a strong, steady rhythm on the basic chord sequences. He is not afforded as much scope as the pianist, but does "take over" in the event of a piano solo— emphasising the chord changes in exactly the same manner as the pianist does when accompanying any other solo.

THE BASSIST

Primarily the provider of the "straight four"—and in this capacity we find him engaged almost the whole of the time. He is, however, included in those "patterns," organised and performed by the section as a whole, to which we now devote the next part of our study—

SECTION PATTERNS

These can either take the form of a concerted cross-beat, or cross-rhythm phrase (Figs. 34, 35), or a concerted excursion into "front-line territory" by way of a phrase which is either in the nature of a counter melody or a "figure" (Figs. 36, 37), whilst yet another form of pattern is produced by a composite effect from the section, which is seen to contain both "melody" and cross-beat rhythms (Fig. 38). But, by whatever means these rhythm section effects are produced, it must be remembered that, even though they draw attention to themselves in the process, their primary object is to heighten the effectiveness of the front-line, to co-operate with it and to co-ordinate whatever phrases are being used.

Fig. 34

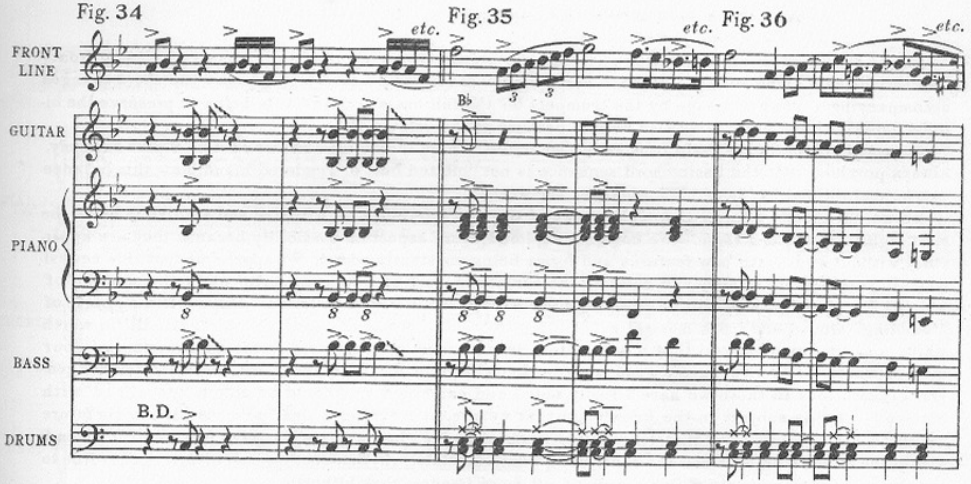


Fig. 35

Fig. 36

Fig. 37

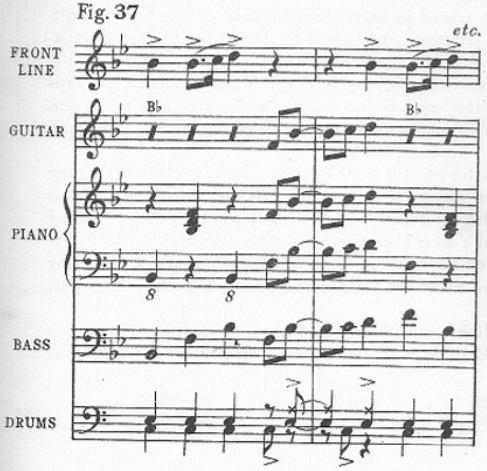
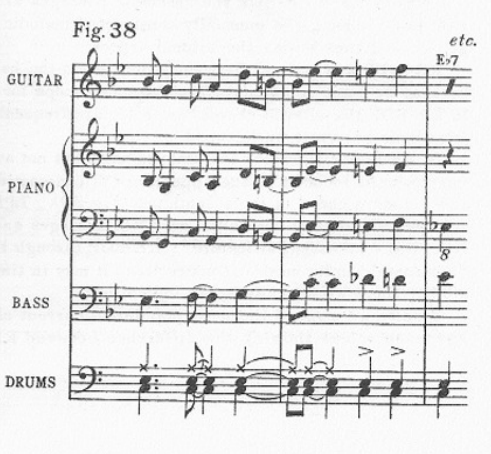


Fig. 38



Big Band Re-Bop

Although this may appear to be quite a subject in itself, it is basically the same as Small Band RE-BOP. It has the same characteristics; follows the same framework, and works according to the same rules—

Solos as before.
Unison section work or ensemble as before.
Rhythm section patterns as before.

But, in the event of unison section phrasing, the accompanying chords can be boosted by using front-line instruments along with the piano. For example, saxes can be used to emphasise the chord changes accompanying a unison passage by the trumpets (or the full brass section— this helps to preserve the bitonal aspect, which might otherwise be lost because of the volume of brass).

Phrases built up in the main from added notes, etc. can be scored for sections in 4 or 5 part harmony, always provided that the basic chord sequence is not "blotted out" or rendered inaudible— this balance can be maintained by "boosting" wherever necessary.

So we have made a fairly thorough survey of the characteristics of RE-BOP and studied in detail the most significant among them. We have not explored every aspect or possibility because they are apparently without end— with new features and forms being constantly added. We appreciate that this newest trend in jazz is in its infancy and must be the subject of much study and experiment in the course of which a lot of new ground will be covered; many wrong tracks will be followed; there will be plenty of "fumbling" around and much musical rubbish produced in the process— but we think it will be worth while, and we are convinced that it will in turn lead to even greater steps in the advancement of "our kind of music." We now have a good working knowledge of RE-BOP, and if we add a few further general observations to those we have already noted and examined, we should be able to go ahead with our study of this subject in the knowledge that we are, at least, on a clearly defined track. For future guidance, we therefore note that RE-BOP is much more than just a "style" in jazz— it is a cult (or trend) within the framework of which the individual, whether soloist, rhythm-section man or arranger, is free to express his own personality with as much, if not more freedom than hitherto.

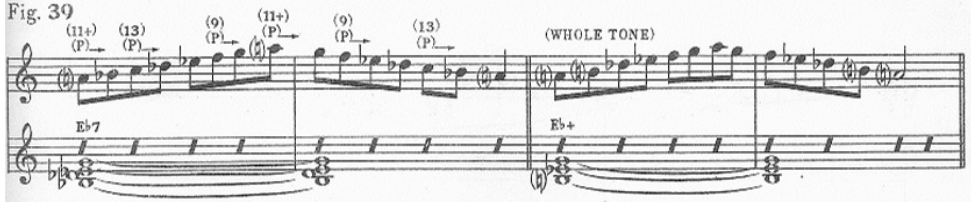
In Small Band RE-BOP, the ensemble passages are scored in unison, not because of the possible difficulties of voicing the unusually constructed melodic phrases, but to avoid obscuring the harmonic background and thus killing the bitonal aspect.

RE-BOP is at present frequently built upon the harmonic progression of the "Blues sequence," perhaps because its basic simplicity affords so much scope for the exploitation of the new chord building technique. In RE-BOP the altered chords and notes are frequently found to have been raised through a semitone from their harmonic background.

In RE-BOP, the whole-tone scale is used, but not as frequently as is generally supposed. This wrong impression is founded on the appearance of consecutive major seconds, which are very often the added notes upon a chord of the seventh (see Fig. 39). In RE-BOP much of the solo playing (particularly by trumpet) consists of very high, very fast passages and general "fireworks." This, although a characteristic, is not an essential feature. RE-BOP, through the appearance of its bitonality, is rapidly becoming "horizontal" in its musical construction— it may in time gravitate toward the atonal school— of this possibility there are already a few indications.

Finally, we append the most popular of current clichés and phrasing styles, together with some specimen scores showing the difference between RE-BOP orchestration and "ordinary" presentation.

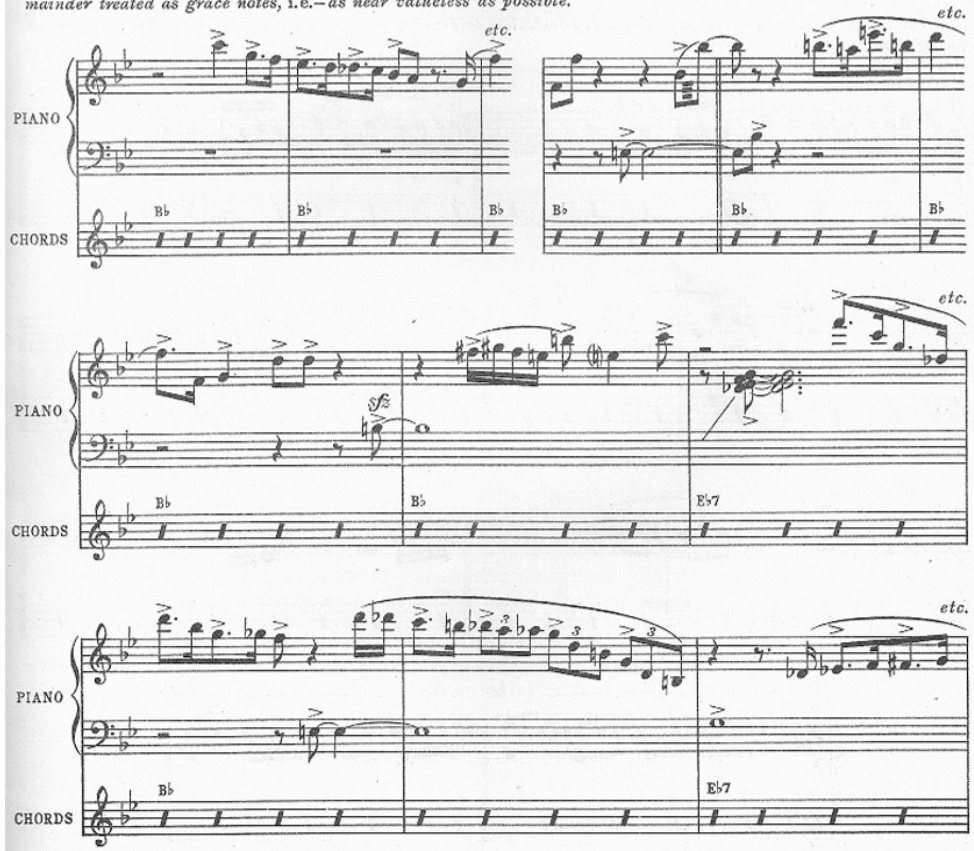
Fig. 39

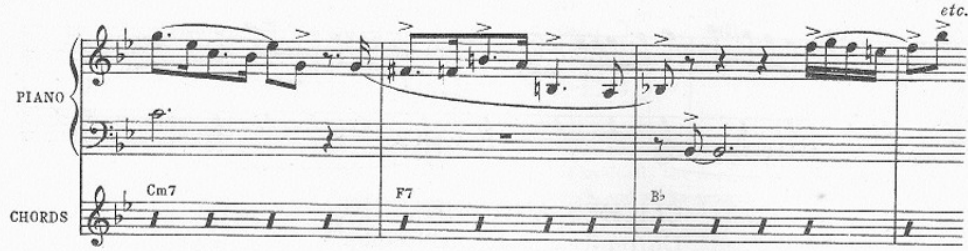


CLICHÉS AND PHRASING

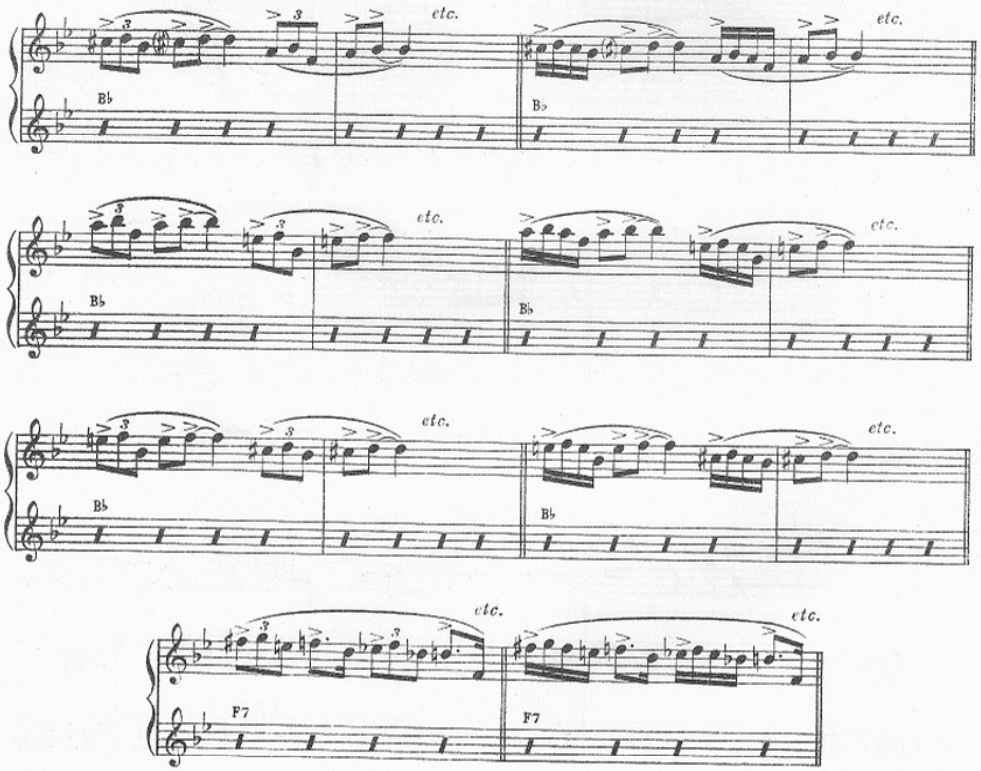
Currently popular in "Re-bop"

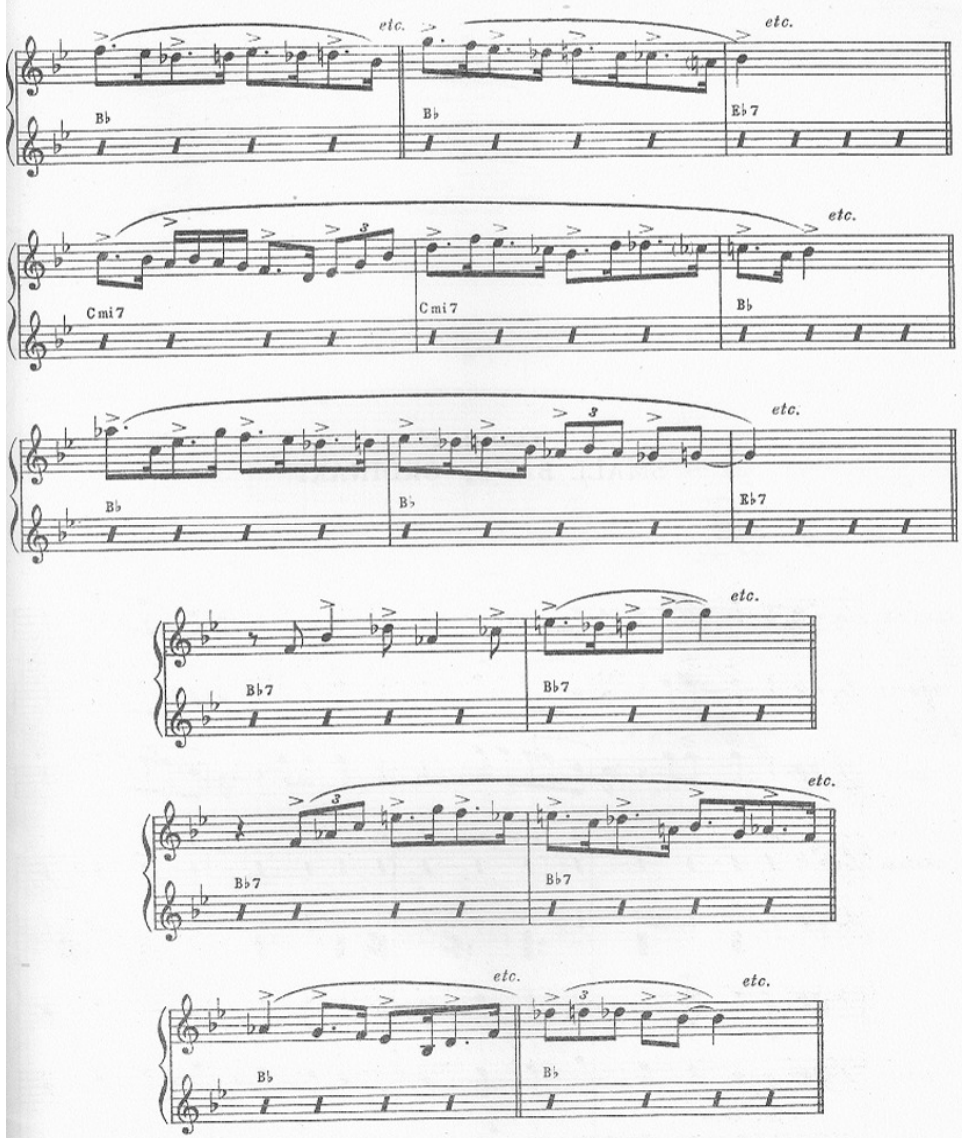
In all the following examples the accents should be observed fully—the unaccented notes should be "ghosted" (particularly the semiquavers). In the triplet or semiquaver groups the first note should be emphasised and the remainder treated as grace notes, i.e.—as near valueless as possible.





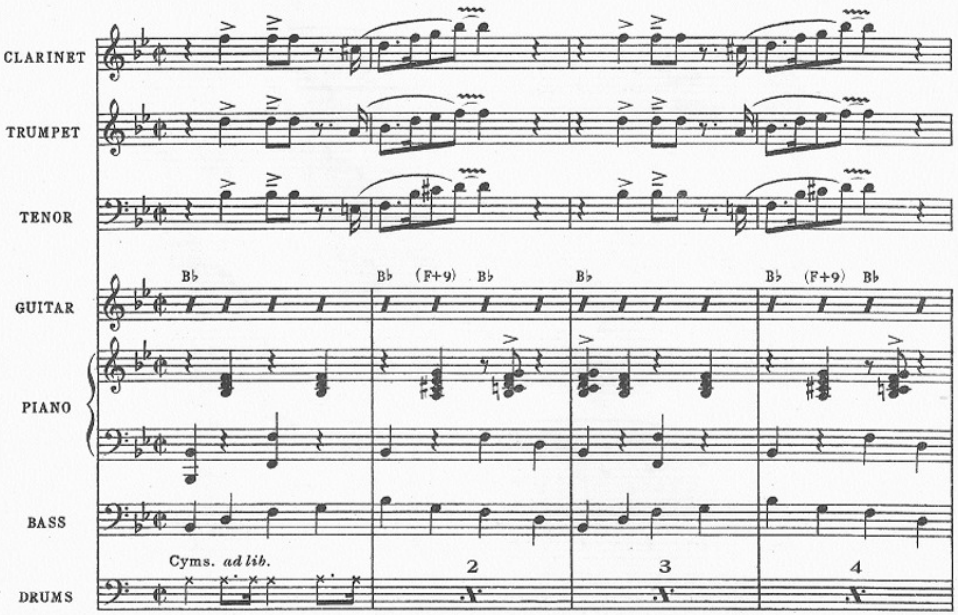
The following examples are suitable for Trumpet, Alto or Tenor Sax., Clarinet, Guitar, etc. (transposed, wherever out of practical range, of course).

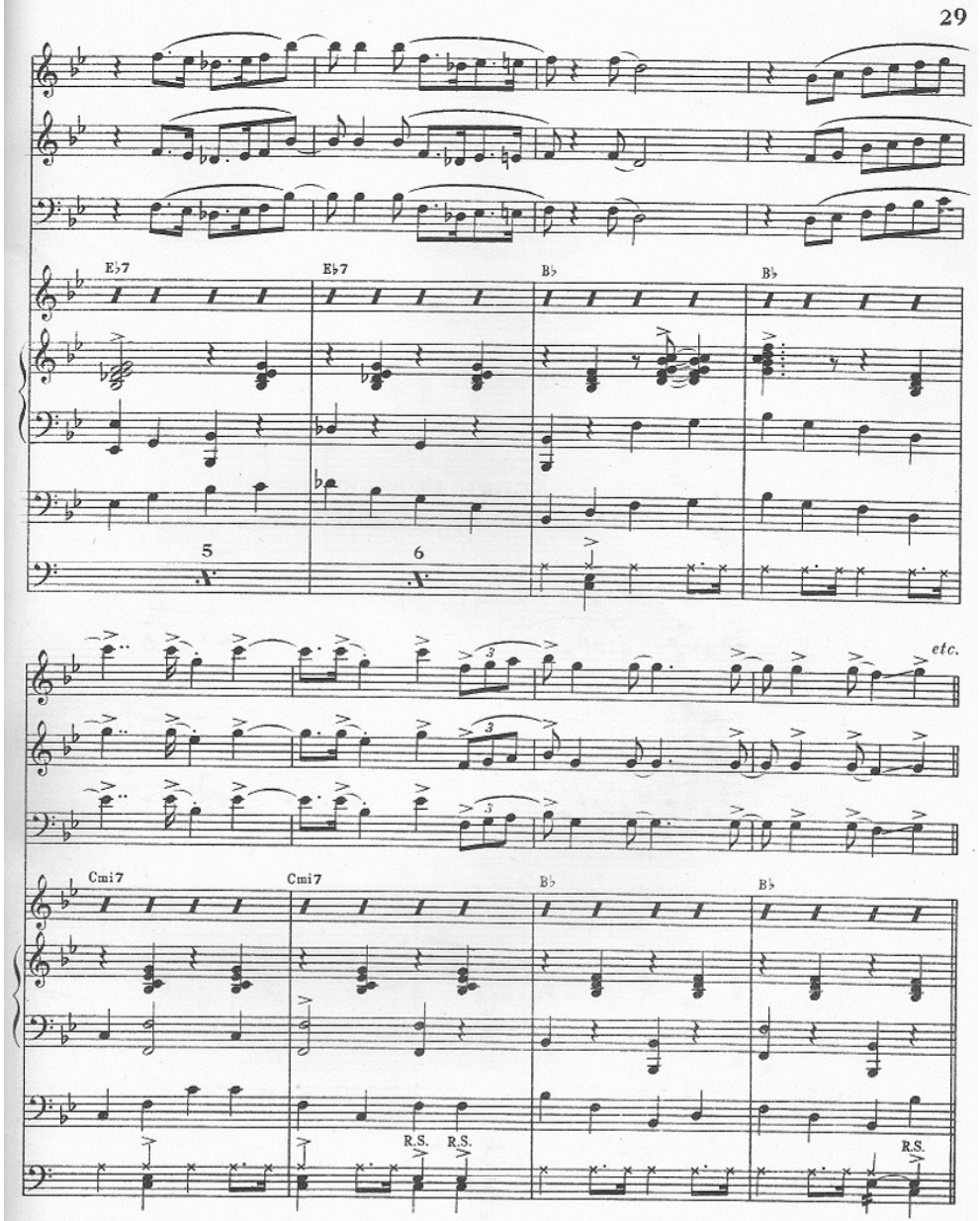




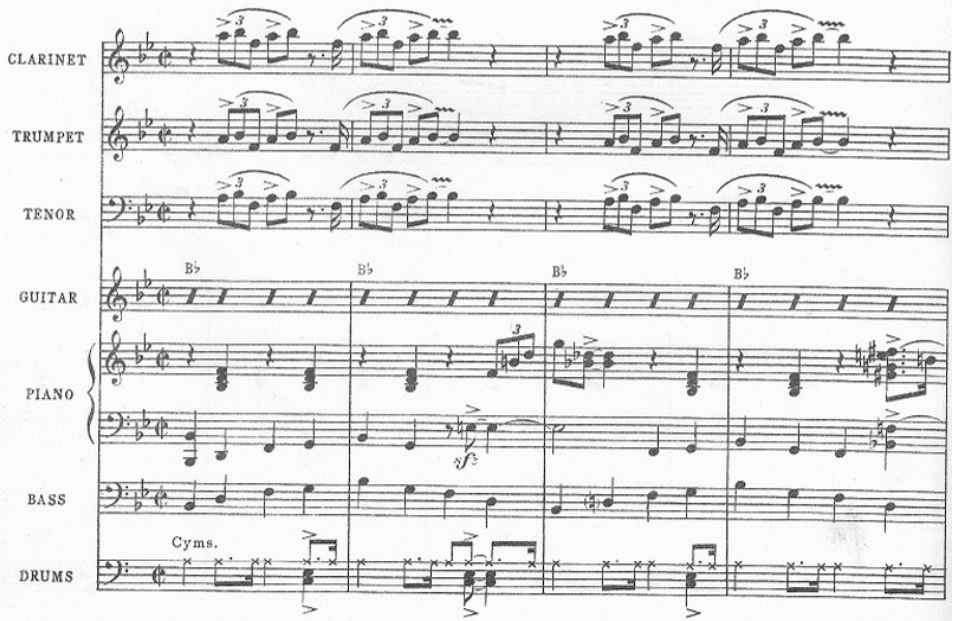
The above examples, if practised through the twelve keys, should give a good basis on which to build individual extemporisations.

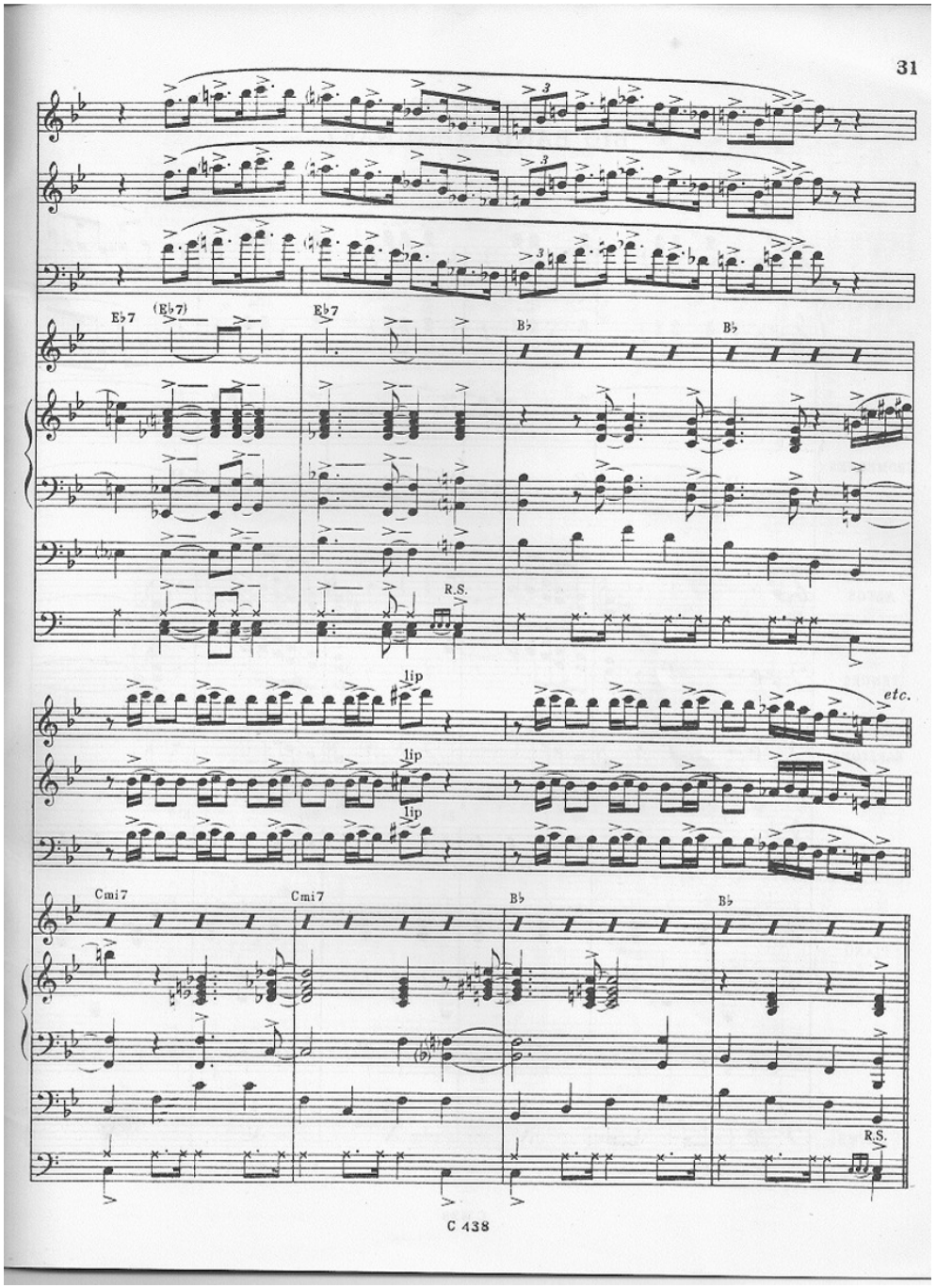
SCORE 1ª
SMALL BAND, "ORDINARY"



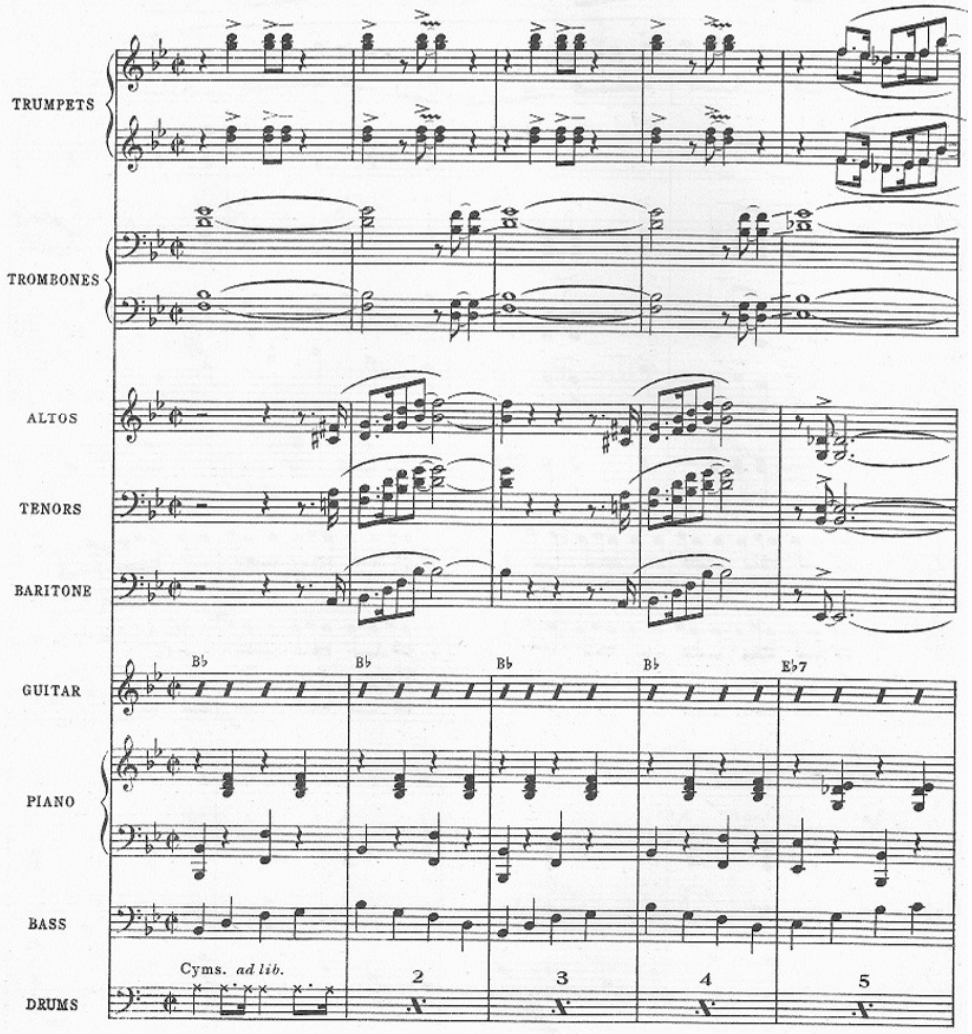


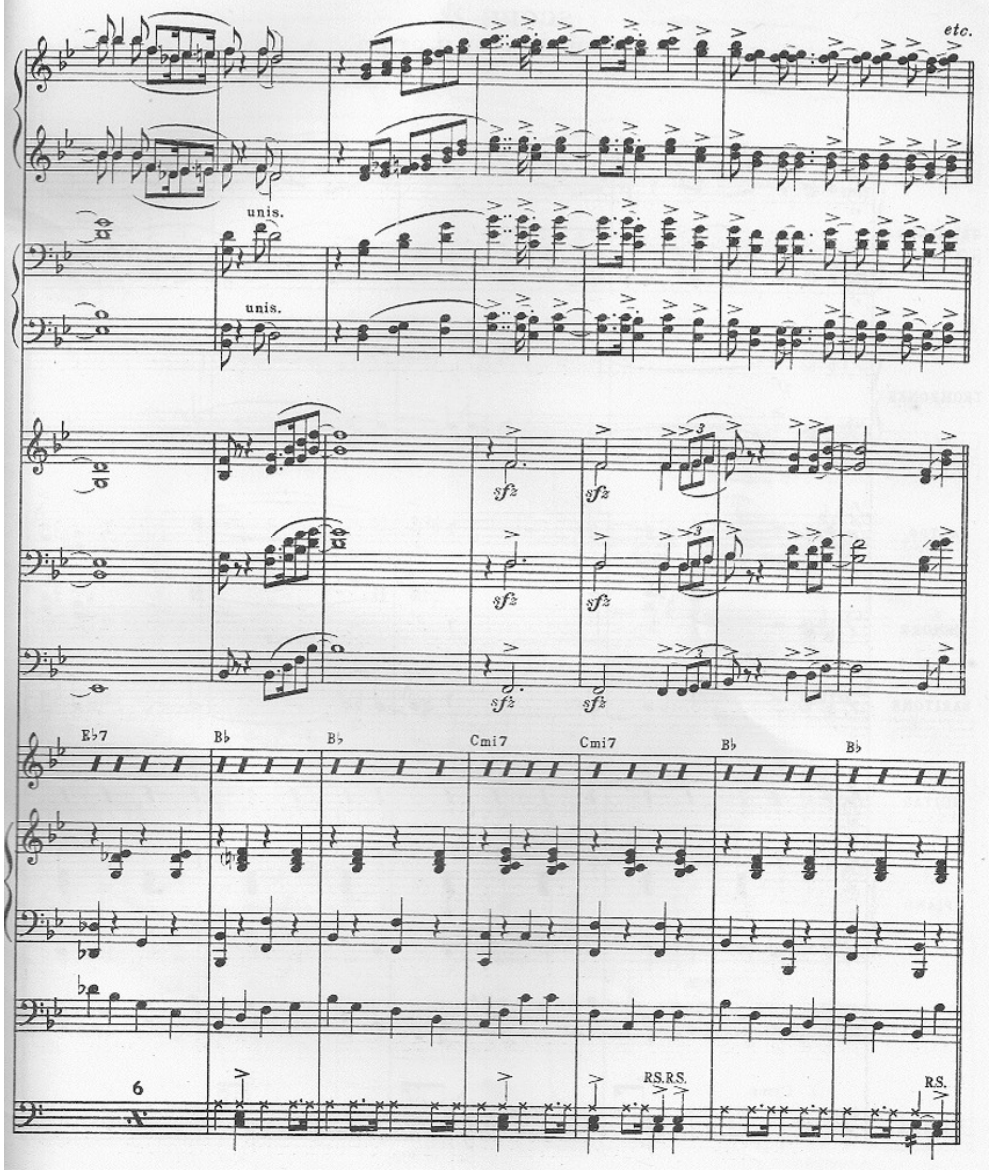
SCORE 1b
SMALL BAND, "RE-BOP"



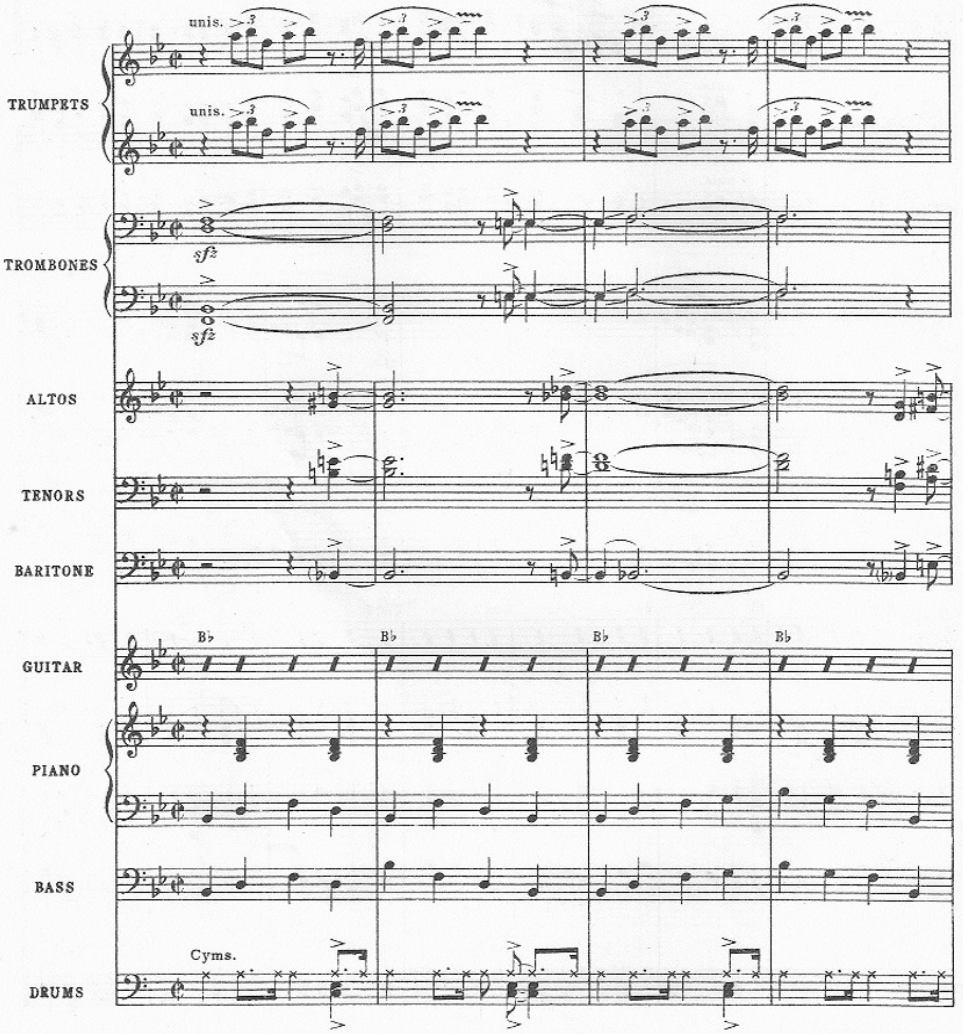


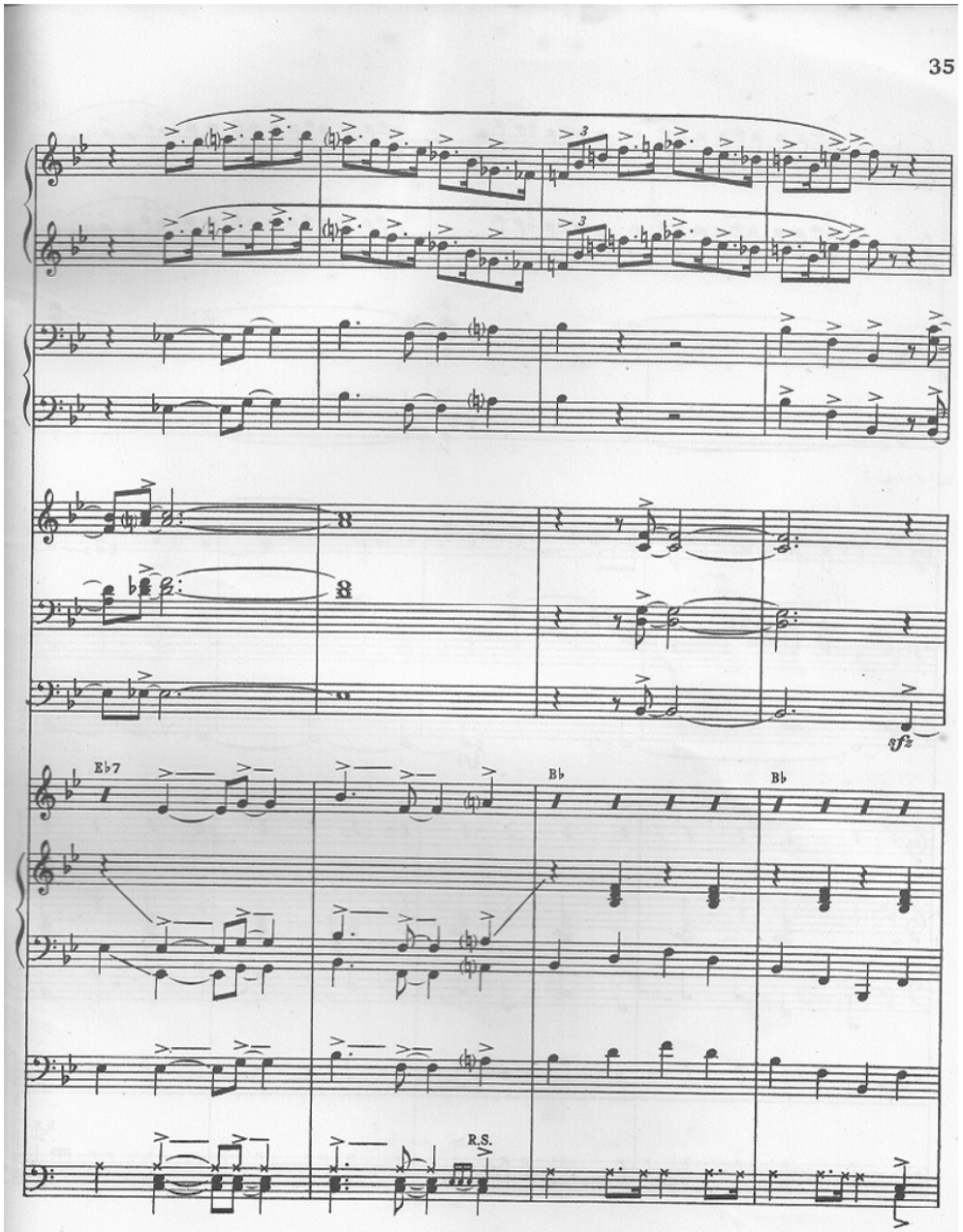
SCORE 2ª
BIG BAND, "ORDINARY"

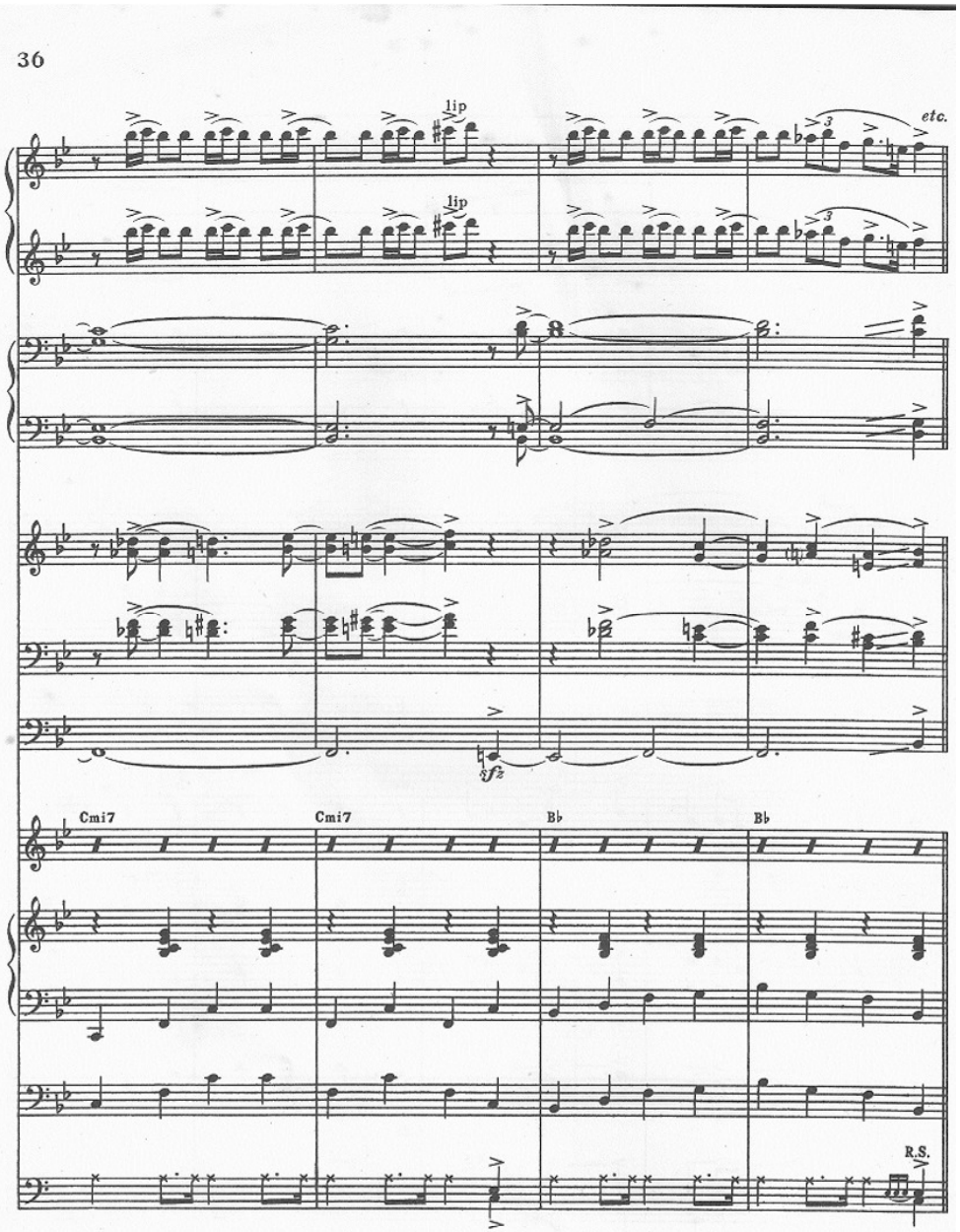




SCORE 2b
BIG BAND, "RE-BOP"







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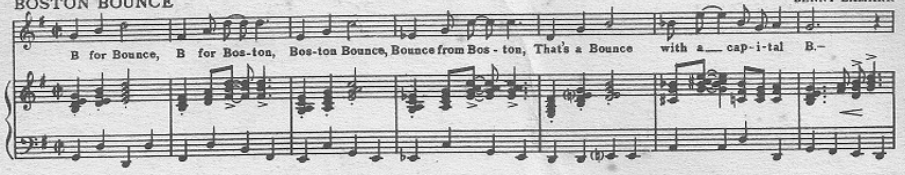
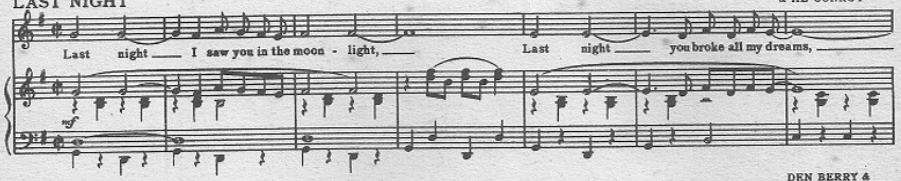


LAST NIGHT

MAX & HARRY NESBITT & AL CONROY



APPLE HONEY

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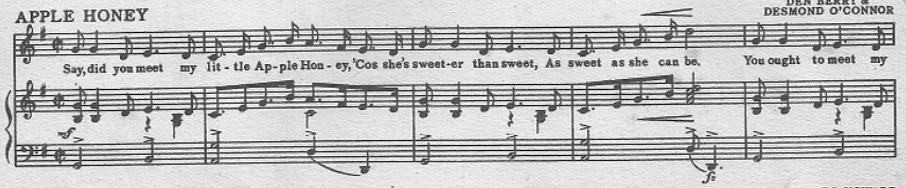
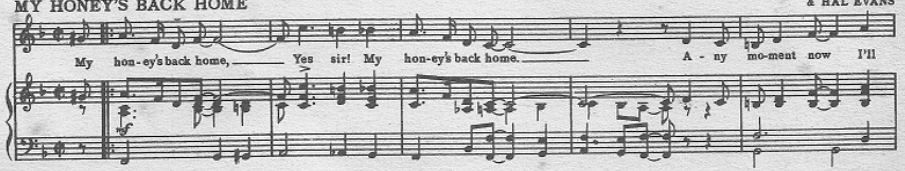


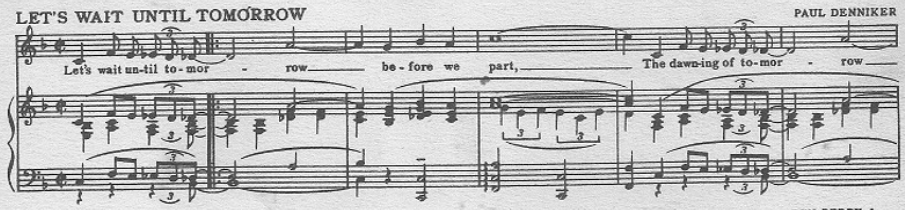
MY HONEY'S BACK HOME

ALEC HOWARD & HAL EVANS



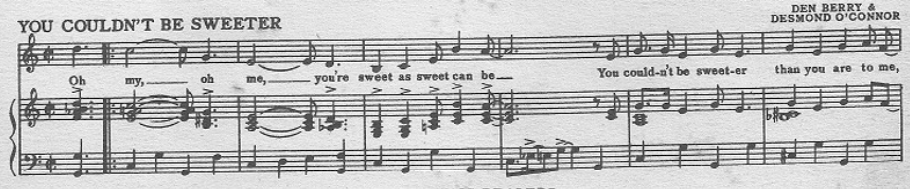
LET'S WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW

PAUL DENNIKER



YOU COULDN'T BE SWEETER

DEN BERRY & DESMOND O'CONNOR



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